

RICHES INCREAS'D

B Y

Giving to the Poor:

O R,

Mr. Thomas Gouges's
Surest and Safest Way of Thriving.

Being a *Conviction* of that grand *Mistake* in many, that what is given to the *Poor*, is a *Loss* to their *Estate*, which is directly contrary, as to the *Experiences* of the *Charitable*, so to the *Testimony* of *God's Spirit* in divers *Places* of *Scripture*.

To which is added,

A *Sermon* of *Good Works*, wherein several *Cases* of *Conscience* concerning *Alms-giving* are resolved, and the *Apostles Charge* concerning *Rich Men* to be *Rich* in *Good Works*, by the same *Reverend Author*.

As also a short *Collection* of *Scripture Testimonies* for doing *Good* to the *Poor*.

With *Recommendatory PREFACES* by
Dr. Owen, *Dr. Manton*, *D. Bates*, and *Mr. Baxter*.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Publick Benefit*, and the *Promoting* of *Charity*. 1709.

To the READER.

Christian Reader,

THE more excellent any Duties of Religion are, the more useful unto the Glory of God, with the good of Mankind; the more diligent and industrious is the common Enemy of such things, either to corrupt the Minds of Men about them, or to divert their Hearts and Affections from them. Of this Nature is Charity and Bounty towards the Poor, and such others as are declared and proposed as meet Objects of them in Scripture; and such Entertainments hath it met withal. Whoever readeth the Word of God with any Attention or Understanding, and withal considers the various disposal of the Conditions of Mankind, of Christians, of Believers in this World, according to the Sovereign Pleasure of his holy wise Providence, cannot but judge, that among all the External Duties, which are required of us in this World, there is none more necessary, none more useful, none wherein the Glory of God is more concerned, than the due and abundant exercise of the Fruits of Charity towards its proper Objects. The Commands for it are so multiplied, the Motives unto it are so excellent, the Rules and Directions for its Exercise so plain and express, that it cannot be wholly neglected, without an open Contempt of the Authority, Love and Wisdom of God: Whence the Scripture pronounceth plainly all Religion to be vain, where this Grace and its Fruits are separated from it. Whereas therefore it was a design beneath the Craft of the Old Serpent, to seduce the Minds of Men unto an open Rejection or Condemnation of it, unless he could at the same time have wrought them unto a general Renunciation of all Religion; he made it his business in the days of Superstition and Darkness, to corrupt them with false Notions about it, and to divert its Exercise from its proper Objects, that under an apprehension of its necessity, the real use and benefit of it, unto the Glory of God, and advantage of the Souls of Men, might be utterly lost. And the success he had herein, through the foresight, which the subtilty of his Nature, and long experience have furnish'd him withal, hath been of no small use unto him, after the first design of it was in a great measure defeated. Hence it is, that whilst the true Nature of Charity, its proper Use, Fruits, Objects and Ends; with that respect which it hath unto God and our own Souls, were lost, obscured, depraved or corrupted, and all made subservient unto a proud Imagination of Merit, and other various Superstitions, none more promoted the outward

ward Works of it than he, and they abounded amongst Men. But when the false Ends, Rules and Motives unto it, which Ignorance and Superstition had imposed upon its exercise were discovered and decry'd, he made use of Pretences from former Abuses, to alienate the Minds of Men from a due apprehension of the absolute necessity of the constant and diligent exercise of his Grace in such outward Duties as whereby others might be relieved. So he became a gainer by his loss. All things in point of Doctrine, as to the Nature and Work of Charity unto the defeatment of Superstition, being rightly stated among us, Men grew cold and regardless of their Duty in it; as though they were resolved they would not do well, unless they might do it on evil Motives and for ill Ends. And because too much formerly hath been ascribed unto it, unto the Corruption of all Religion, some think it reason enough quite to neglect it. But these Methods of Satan have been sufficiently detected; and I suppose most Men are and may be easily convinced, that there is a wide distance between performing Works of Charity to merit the Salvation of our Souls, and the neglect of them unto their Damnation, and a safe plain path to walk between them.

But the truth is, the most forcible Objections against the due Exercise of Charity, and abounding in the Fruit of it, are those which arose from that influence which Unbelief and Corrupt Affections have upon the Minds of Men. And amongst those the chiefest, and that which Men judge to have the evidence of Demonstration in it is this, that what they part withal for the relief of others, doth in proportions decrease their own Enjoyments. And whereas the Minds of many do greatly extend their desires beyond their present possession of earthly things, and the necessary occasions, as they suppose, of the most, at present and for the future with respect unto their Families, being proportioned in a scan y measure unto what they enjoy, the force of this Objection is great, and worketh effectually on all occasions of the due exercise of Charity. Neither can it be otherwise conceived, if respect be had unto the present instance only. For he that maketh the best and most advantageous Bargain or Purchase, is sure enough to be a loser by it, if there be not a time of making a return in his way of Trade. But the common assurance hereof, is sufficient to satisfy the Minds of Men, in parting with their Money on such Occasions. Wherefore against this last strong hold of Satan in the Imaginations of Men, against the due exercise of Charity and Bounty, the Reverend Author of the ensuing Discourse hath planted that Battery from Scripture, Reason and Experience, whereby what seemeth

of real strength in it, is utterly demolished. His design is not to prove, nor will he undertake that he who is bountiful unto others, shall surely thrive in this World, if he hath no other end of his Charity and Bounty, but only that he may so thrive. But on a right and due performance of this Duty, in Obedience unto the command of God, out of Love to Christ, according unto the Rules, and for all its proper ends, he undertakes to demonstrate, that no Man shall be a loser thereby. Yea he goeth farther, and proves from plain Testimonies of Scripture (against whose evidence there is no rising up, but by express Unbelief) confirmed with signal Instances of Experience, that in the ordinary way of God's dealing with Professors of the Gospel, their Charity, Liberality and Bounty shall certainly conduce unto their Advantage in this World, especially where they are eminent in their exercise; so as that the Truth lies absolutely on the other side of this Objection. And no more is required for the Satisfaction of the Minds of Men herein, but that they exercise Faith in the Promises of God, in proportion unto that Trust which they have unto the Advantages of Trade from common Prudence and Experience. For in neither way Men ordinarily expect present sensible Returns; nor will an industrious Person be discouraged, if he find no great present Gain in his Trade, or meet with some losses, whilst he is in the way that rationally and probably leads to Advantagē. Nor ought we to prescribe other Measures unto our selves, nor expect immediate visible Advantage, as to the Concerns of this World in what we Trade withal for Immortality and Glory, especially having the Security of God's Promise to relie upon, which so far exceeds what the Minds of Men may fancy to themselves, from the ordinary course of things here below. Allow therefore the Determination of Times, Seasons, Ways and Manner of Things unto the Sovereign Pleasures of God, and there is no more certain Truth than what is here proposed; namely, that abounding in Works of Charity is *The best and safest way of Thriving* in this World. And an eminent Truth that is, which the Reverend Author hath rescued from general Inadvertency or Oblivion, the Effects whereof have been little discerned, because the Faith of it hath been so much lost. And I must add, that Divine Providence hath cast the Discovery and Defence of this great and useful Truth upon a Person eminently suited unto the Work he is called unto. For whereas he is deprived of all outward Advantages (as well as many others) not only of encreasing his Wealth in the World, but of ordinary Supplies for himself and Family, beyond his

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his own peculiar Patrimony, he abundantly manifests himself to live in the Faith of that Truth, which he endeavours to implant on the Minds and Consciences of others; and doth but invite Men into the same Belief and Practice with himself. And the Truth which he pleadeth for, is so fully confirmed and illustrated by himself, that there remains no more for me or others to do unto that end, but to give our Testimony unto it, and to endeavour the acceptance of it with all Professors of the Gospel, which I hereby do, and shall do, as God shall administer Opportunity.

John Owen.

TO THE READER.

Good Reader,

THou hast here put into thy hands an Exhortation to *Charity*, a Duty so lovely and * God like, that without other Arguments it bespeaketh its own * Acts 20. respect; but the dull Heart of Man needs to be 35. *excited and quickned*, we all love a *cheap Religion*, but the *costly* and *expensive* Duties are too often neglected and declined, therefore the Reverend Author in this Treatise thought fit to recommend the Practice of a *more liberal and diffusive Alms-giving* with the *more earnestness* to well disposed Christians. A meet Advocate for so good a Cause, we willingly hear every Man in his own Faculty, none so fit to exhort others to Charity, as those that are *eminently Charitable* themselves.

For the Argument he useth I am fully of his mind, *That Liberality doth not impoverish Men, but enrich them rather*, as Wells are the *sweeter* but not the *emptier* for the oftner dreining: A Truth befriended by the Scripture, Reason, and the constant Observation and Experience of the World. 1. By Scripture, witness the many *temperat Promises* scattered throughout the Word of God, and applyed to the Charitable. If any reply that these things were spoken *pro more facilius* according to that Dispensation of the Covenant, when *eternal Happiness* was more *sparingly received*; and that *temporal things* are not so *absolutely* promised under the Gospel, as under the *Padagog* of the Law, because *Life and Immortality* are now brought to light. I answer, that yet God doth not discontinue the Dispensation; look as the *Promiss* of *eternal Life* was not *wholly shut out* of that Covenant, &c.

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the temporal Blessing did more *visibly* appear in it, so now the temporal Blessing is not wholly shut out, though the Gospel runneth *mainly* on *Spiritual* and *eternal* Blessings: Yea and I will add further, that it seemeth by our Lord's own Speech, *Luke* 6. 38. And *Paul's* Quotation, *2 Cor.* 9. 9. That the old Testament promise of *Plenty to the Alms-giver*, doth belong to the Gospel and standeth *firm* and in *full force* under the *New Testament Dispensation*, and so seemeth to be exempt from the Lot of his Fellows, or to be a *peculiar* and *reserved* case.

2. It seemeth also agreeable to *Reason*, for the *Devil* is not the dispenser of Temporal Blessings, but God, and a *faithful* improvement of them is not the way to *forfeit*, but *secure* and *increase* them; *faithful* Stewards have not the trust taken out of their Hands, but the *unfaithful*, *Luke* 16. Add to this, that God loveth to *pay in kind*, and to retaliate with Men, both in *Rewards* and *Punishments*, *Mat.* 5. 7. *Blessed are the Merciful for they shall find Mercy*. Moreover consider how conducive it is to the Concernment of the World, that *Unbelief* should now and then be *sensibly confuted*, *Mal.* 3. 10. *Prove me now here with*, saith the Lord of Hosts. By *In*stances in this kind God submitterh to a *Tryal* upon *Experiences*. Lastly, how cautionally may it be presumed, that Men, that have a *large Heart*, should not be *disabled* by their *Bounty*, but still have a *sufficiency* to perform more Acts of that kind, and the *prejudiced World* may have no cause to think that their *improvident Bounty* hath brought *want* upon them, if it were indeed so, I plead not for it, but the most *regular Bounty* is in the Worlds esteem *improvident*, for they think *all lost* which is not *reserved* from them and theirs, or expended on their Lusts.

3. I alledge the *Observation* and *Experience* both of *Ancient* and *Modern* Times, who have always found that this *scattering tend th to increase*, as the Loaves in the Gospel *Miracle* were increased in the distribution. † *Chrysostom* is often improving this *Observation*.

† *Chryso. Hom.* 33. I remember be saith in one place of *de petit. filiorum Zebedai.* the poor *δίδωτε μάλλον ἢ λαμβάνετε* that they give rather than take.

And again, *μηδὲν ἵκετε ἰδεν ποσὸν δίδωτε* *do not think Alms to be a wasteful Profusion but a Traffick*, you receive more than you give.

† *Paulus Diaconus* lib. 3. cap. 12. I might relate here what † *Paulus Diaconus* observeth of the Emperor *Tiberius* the Second, who was a great *Alms giver*, and the large Streams of his *Bounty* were still fed

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fed by the *strange* and *unexpected* supplies which God sent him from time to time, as by finding *casually* a vast Treasure hid in the Palace, as also by the Treasures of *Narses* hid in *Italy*, and other means, he was never *weary* of *giving*, and God was never *weary* of *Blessing*, that he might still give more.

But I must forbear multiplying these Instances, lest this *preambulary Writing* swell beyond all due Proportion.

Upon these Reasons I think the Argument enforced in this Book sound and good, and proper to its end, and hath the more force, because it attacketh Covetousness in its own quarters, a piece of Wisdom which I observe in *our Lord Jesus Christ* every where.

But yet I would interpose *these Cautions*, first that Temporal things are not to be looked upon as the *chief Reward*, nor to be our *great Motive*; the *Eternal Reward* together with the *Conscience of our Duty or Love to God* must suffice, and for other things refer it to him, for what may be expected in this kind. There are in this and in every Duty, *four* sorts of *Principles* which Men are acted by; some *false* and *rotten*, as *vain Glory*, Matth. 6. 1. Some *more tolerable*, as *fear of Temporal Judgments*, and hope of *Temporal Mercies*; some *very good* and *sound*, as hope of eternal Reward, Heb. 6. 9, 10, 11. Some *rare and excellent*, as *Thankfulness* and *Love to God*, a due impress of his great Love to us by Christ, 2 Cor. 8. 8, 9. The *Glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. Phil. 1. 11. *Complacency in the Work*, &c. Now they that would be *sincere* should be *tender* of their *Motives*.

Secondly, God will try our Faith. For a great while this *Retaliation* may be suspended, Eccl. 11. 1. *After many days thou shalt find it*. It may be if you do not find it, your Children may, for it bringeth an *extraordinary Blessing* on our Families, Psal. 37. 26, &c. At other times the *Recompence* may be *more speedy*, as in *increasing the Widows Oyl*, 1 Kings 17. 13, 16.

Thirdly, We should not lift up a *secret desire* of *Worldly Increase* to satisfy our *covetous Minds*. In short this Motive may be urged to *check Temptations* to sordid sparing. And when God maketh any such returns of our Bounty it should be observed and improved as a *confirmation* of our Faith, and an *incouragement* to our Labour of Love, and a *Plea* to quicken others from our own experiences, when the fear of want maketh them backward to Charity. I have no more now to add but Prayers, that God would bless this Treatise to thee, and granting to the Author, an all sufficiency in all things that he may still abound in every good Work.

Thine in the Lord's Service.

Tho. Manton.

To

To the READER.

Reader,

GOD, whose Right is Supreme in our Persons and all that we possess, has impos'd a Tribute on us, not for his own Profit, but of those who are his deputed Receivers. And his most wise Providence has order'd the various Conditions of Men here, that some abound, some are in want, that they might glorifie him by the exercise of several Graces; the poor by an humble Patience and contented Resignation to his Will, and the Rich by a compassionate Liberality to their Brethren.

The performance of this Duty, gives us a regular enjoyment of what we have. 'Tis our Saviour's Command, *give alms of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you.* Till the first Fruits were offer'd up under the Law, none of the *Israelites* might eat of the new Corn, 'twas yet profane to them; but afterwards the whole Harvest was consecrated and granted to their free use.

The neglect of paying what God has reserved as an acknowledgement we have received all from him, makes a forfeiture of our Estates. And how foolish is it to deny a part at his Command, who can by Right and Power deprive us of all in a moment?

But though God's Title be paramount, yet he is pleas'd to invite us to Acts of a diffusive Charity by the most persuasive Arguments. Godliness is profitable unto all things (and especially this branch of it) *having the promise of Life that now is, and of that which is to come.* And to confirm our Belief, that it has a happy influence upon our prosperity here, 'tis added, *It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.* God signs himself our Debtor for that, that is laid out for him, as if it were not all his own. *He that has pity on the Poor, lends to the Lord, and that which he has given he will pay him again,* and that not only from the Treasury of Eternity hereafter, but here in Temporal Blessings: So that if we consider our future or present Interest, there are great Encouragements to remove the Hindrances of this blessed Duty.

Covetousness as it implies an eagerness and excess in procuring an Estate, springs from different Inclinations. Sometimes from Sensuality, to make Provisions for the Flesh, or from Ambition, by that means to obtain Honour, and others of the like nature; and when the guilty Affection is mortified, the immoderated desire of Riches that was a Symptomatical Distemper ceases with it.

But

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But the usual Fountain of Covetousness, as it implies a tenacious Humour, and irregular base keeping what they possess: Are, 1. A jealousy of losing what was got with much diligence, and care, and labour. 2. Solitude for the future, Men are as anxious to preserve what they have, as ardent to procure what they have not, to secure themselves against all possible Wants. Now the word of God assures us, that the best way to preserve and increase our Estates, is by giving liberal supplies to the want of others.

The liberal Man devises liberal things, and by liberal things he shall stand. He that considers where he may disperse his Bounty, and place a Benefit to the best Advantage, has a special Protection, and as he is like God in giving, so he shall be in not being the poorer for his giving. There is an inseparable Connexion *between give, and it shall be given to you again.* Charity is a productive Grace, that enriches the Giver more than the Receiver. The great Lord of all things sometimes by admirable ways, beyond all humane expectation blesses the Merciful; and gives a present Reward, as if it were by his own Hand. As there are numerous Examples of God's Justice in punishing the Covetous, sometimes by sending a Gangreen into their Estates that consumes it before their Eyes, sometimes by the profuseness of their Children that wast all in a short time, that was got by excessive sparing, so 'tis as visible that his Providence blesses those in their Persons and Children, who have been faithful Stewards in dispensing what is committed to their Trust.

This methinks should prevail ever with the Men of Sense. Do not they every day venture their Estates for Gain, though a Fire, a Ship-wrack, a Bankrupt, or innumerable other Disasters may undo them? And shall an unfaithful Word have more credit with us than the God of Truth? Is not his Power over all things? He governs the Wills of Men, commands the Wind and Seas, makes the Fields fruitful.

But the Sons of the Earth may object, that those who are charitable are not always prosperous, but sometimes are in Exigencies themselves. To this a just answer may be given.

1. The meer external Work of Charity does not entitle to the Blessings of the Promise, but when it is perform'd a right. 1. From what is our own. Some that are enricht by unjust means, think to quiet their Consciences, and appease God by giving part to good Uses; as if he would be a receiver of their Thetis, and corrupted with a share in their Spoils. But he hates robbing for a Burnt-offering. 2. The
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end must be sincere, to imitate the Father of Mercies in that Attribute that is his dearest Glory; but a liberal Relief of our Brethren. 3. The Affection in giving must be free and joyful. 'Tis the Heart that gives price to our Gifts in God's esteem. A cup of cold Water taken from the Spring of Love shall not fail of a Reward. But the richest Gifts without it are of no value with him.

2. Supposing a Christian do abound in Works of Charity, and to perform them according to God's Will, 'tis possible he may not have a Reward here, that our Charity may not be with a chief regard to our Temporal Interest, and for other wise Reasons. But this special Case will not infringe the Truth of God's Promise. When God encouraged the Obedience of Children to their Parents, promised them long Life in the Land of *Canaan*, was it deceitful Dealing, if he translated a dutiful Child to live for ever in Heaven that infinitely better Country? If I promise one a Shilling for his Days Labour, has he reason to complain if he receives a piece? God may give above, but never below his Promise. He reserves a Liberty to be better than his Word to his Servants. And this Consideration should inflame us to this Duty. The Crown of Life and Treasures of Heaven are Motives of a nobler Strain, and more worthy the breast of a Christian, than any present Payment, nor but a Believer might have an Eye to Temporal Benefits as the Manifestations of God's Goodness, but chiefly to Eternal. In short the Blessings of both Worlds are promised as the Reward of Charity. O that happy Advantage of rich Men, if they had Hearts to improve it.

William Bates,

To the READER.

Good Reader,

THE Author of this Book doth not here sollicit you to Charity for nothing, nor for himself, but upon high and honourable Designs, though managed by a Man not high in the Pomp and Splendor of the World; yea upon the high Design of your own Salvation, God can relieve the Poor, and do good to other Men without us, but it is our Honour to be made his Stewards, and his great Mercy to us, to receive that Honour, yea to have a willing Heart, though we want a Purse: Who hath not some Talents by
which

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which he may do good, if he improve them, and for which at the time of Retribution he must give account. If *Peter* and *John* must say, *Silver and Gold have we none*, yet such as they have, they may and must give.

Charity in general is praised by all sorts of Men, even by them that will not practice it, yea by the Destroyers that set themselves against it! even our *Judas's* that bear the Bag, pretend Charity to the Poor, while they grudge it unto Christ, as needless wast: Yet it is for pretended Charity, that Charity and the Charitable are destroyed, and Cruelty is used to Mens Souls and Bodies. Will not all the World then condemn us if we be not Charitable. Papists are for good Works on one account, and Protestants on another, yea *Mahometans* and *Heathens* on another; but all cry up Charity and good Works. But in what do Men more sin against their own Professions, except it be in their want of the highest Act of Charity, even their Love to God, and Holiness and Glory.

It is pity Men should need any other Motive, than that which is fetcht from God's Favour, and the heavenly Reward. But yet Christ who hath promised an hundred fold (in value) in this Life, alloweth us to use that Promise as our lower Motive. Three sorts of Judges will censure this Book, which perswadeth Men, that *Good Works* are the way to *Thrive*, that is, *meer Reason, Faith and Experience*. *Meer Reason* will be ready to say, that this is but *affected Talk* to open Mens Purfes, and not believed by him that writeth it: Because it is an unlikely thing: *Faith* will soon consent to it, that at least, we shall have a Reward in Heaven, and so much here as God seeth to be best. But the Question is, what Experience saith. They that never tryed the way, can have no Experience of it. And two sorts more there are that may be able here to give no Testimony to it: First, those that have miscarried in the manner, and taken those for good Works, which (at least *hic & nunc*) were none. Secondly, and those that God seeth meet to try, as *Job*, and keep low in the World, either to save themselves from sin, or to exercise Charity of others. For my own part seeing the Author desireth me to speak my own Experience, I must say, That I never prospered more in my small Estate, than when I gave most, and needed least. I have in another Book of this Author said something of the *Quota Parts*, How much must be given, whether the tenth at least! my own Rule hath been, first to *contrive to need my self as little as may be*, and lay out none on need-nots, but to live frugally

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gally on a little: 2. To serve God in my place upon that little Competency which he allowed me to my self, that what I had my self might be as good a Work for common Good, as that which I gave to others: And 3. To do all the good I could with all the rest, preferring the most publick, and the most durable, and *cæteris paribus*, the nearest. And the more I have practised this, the more I have had to do it with, and when I gave almost all, more came in (without any's Gift) I scarce knew how, at least unexpected: But when by *Improvvidence* I have cast my self into Necessities of using more upon my self, or upon things in themselves of less Importance, I have prospered much less than when I did otherwise. And when I had contented my self to devote that Stock which I had gotten to Charitable Uses after my Death, instead of laying out at present, that so I might secure somewhat for my self while I lived, in probability all that is like to be lost; whereas when I took that present Opportunity and trusted God for the time to come, I wanted nothing and lost nothing.

Experiences are contemptible to none but Atheists, who believe not *God's Providences*? I remember that great and excellent Person (whose published *Contemplations* hint the same to the World, though without his Consent) hath told me, how the strange Providences of God in laming and disabling his Horses, and other Impeditions in a Journey towards *London*, for Worldly Advantages, on the Lord's Day, when he was young, did convince him, and engage him ever after to spend that Day as he hath since done, and there directed his Children to do. God governeth this World, and hath some previous Rewards and Punishments, stops and helps, though the great and full Retribution be hereafter. I perswade none imprudently to cast away their Estates, and make themselves beholding to others: But I say with this Reverend Author, that I am perswaded, did Men devote themselves and all that they have, to do the greatest Good they can in the World, it would not only make Life sweeter, Consciences quieter and Death easier, but also be a notable Means of God's prospering them in their Estates except in some Cases of special Tryal, or needful and profitable Affliction.

Richard Baxter.

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T H E
Surest and Safest

W A Y of
THRIVING, &c.

Matth. X. 41, 42.

He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous mans reward.

And whosoever shall give unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a Disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

TH E Troubles whereunto God bringeth his Ministers and People, though they be many and Great, yet are they not more, and greater, then the Comforts which he afforded unto them, to support and encourage them in their Troubles. Instance this Chapter, and the Sermon of Christ therein recorded, concerning those sore Trials whereunto his Church and Children should be brought. As any kind of Affliction is foretold, a proper and peculiar Consolation is usually annexed. Therefore to establish the Hearts of his suffering Servants, and to encourage their Succourers. He closes up His Sermon with the words of the Text, wherein, He declareth not only that high account which he had of His Ministers, and People themselves, but also

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of them who should yield any Relief, or upon His account shew kindness to them, assuring them; *That he who receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets Reward. And he that receiveth a Righteous man in the name of a Righteous Man, should receive a Righteous Mans Reward.*

The words in brief contain, A Declaration of that great Benefit, which they bring to themselves, who afford any Relief and Succour to Ministers, or other Saints; teaching, *That there is no such way to fill our Treasures, as by emptying them for God.*

For the clearing of these words, I shall briefly shew you,

1. Who is here meant by a *Prophet*. And who by a *Righteous Man*.

2. What is meant by *receiving* them.

3. What is the *Reward* which followeth thereupon.

I. For the first, who is here meant by a *Prophet*; and who by a *Righteous Man*.

By a *Prophet* our Saviour here meaneth not only extraordinary Ministers, such as were immediately and extraordinarily inspired by the *Holy Ghost*; or who had extraordinary Revelations to foretell things to come: But also ordinary Ministers of the Word, and Interpreters of the Scriptures, as *Joh*

4. 44 *Rev.* 11. 18.

By *Righteous Men* he meaneth his *Saints*, or such as testify their Justification through Faith in Christ, by their Sanctification, and Fruits of a good Conscience, whom commonly the Scripture stileth *Saints*.

II. For the Second what is meant by *receiving* these?

For answer thereunto, you must know, there are two things whereunto this receiving may have a respect.

1. To the *Word* and *Message* of a Minister, and so

it signifies, the hearkning to, and embracing their holy Counsel and Doctrine.

2. To the *Person* of a Minister, and so it signifies, the harbouring or shewing kindness to him, as is evident from the Instance of *sold Water*, giving unto a *Prophet*, or *Righteous Man*, expressed in the following Verse. Both these are employed under this Phrase of *receiving a Prophet*, viz. His *Doctrine*, by embracing and submitting to it; and his *Person*, by Harbouring, Succouring, and Relieving him according to his Need.

By the *receiving a Prophet*, in the name of a *Prophet*, is meant a succouring and relieving him for his particular *Calling* sake, *eo nomine*, because he is a *Prophet*. So by *Receiving a Righteous Man*, in the name of a *Righteous Man*, intendeth the same thing; namely, the relieving him, for his *general* Callings sake, because he is a *Christian*, a *Child of God*, and a *Member of Christ*.

III. For the third Particular, what is here meant by the *Reward of a Prophet, and of a Righteous Man*? Answer, These Phrases of *receiving a Prophet*, and of a *Righteous Mans Reward*, may be taken *Actively*, or *Passively*. *Actively*, for that Reward which a *Prophet* or a *Righteous Man* giveth. *Passively*, for that which is by God given to the one and to the other. *The Reward which a Prophet giveth*, is Ministerially to Preach the word of Reconciliation to such as receive them, as *Peter* did to *Cornelius*, Acts 10. 34, &c. To pray for them, as *Abraham* for *Abimelech*, Gen. 20. 7, 17. And to bless them, as *Melchisedek* blessed *Abraham*, Gen. 17. 9.

The Reward which a *Righteous Man* giveth is privately to instruct and edifie, to pray for, and to be a good Pattern and Example of *Righteousness*, to such as entertain or otherwise relieve him.

The Reward which is given by God, to either of these, for that kindness which any shew unto them,

4 The Surest and Safest

is such a surpassing, and excellent weight of Glory, as cannot be expressed by the Tongue of Men, or Angels, yet different in Degrees, as is evident, *Dan. 12. 3.*

Some take these Phrases, *Of receiving a Prophet,* and a *Righteous Mans Reward*, in the former sense, *Actively*; and others, *Passively*. I conceive it may be taken in both.

The words thus explained do afford unto us several Points of Doctrine.

From the Duty here expressed of receiving, and relieving *Prophets* and *Righteous Men*, with the manner of setting it down, we may observe.

1. Doct. *That all needful Succour and good Entertainment is to be afforded to Ministers of the Gospel.*

This is the main and principal Point intended.

2 Doct. *Christian Kindness is to be shewed not only to Ministers, but also to all the Members of Christ.* For our blessed Saviour contents not himself to have mentioned a *Prophet*, but also addeth a *Righteous Man*.

These two sorts make up the *Household of Faith*; to whom the Apostle exhorteth Christians especially to do good. *Gal. 6. 10.*

Q. *Is our Charity to extend no further?*

A. Yes, even to all that are in want, but especially to such as have a particular relation to Christ, as being his Members, or Ministers; because Christ in them is after an especial manner succoured and relieved. It will be therefore our wisdom to take notice of the extent of this Duty, and in all we do, either for Christians or others, to see to it, that what we do, is done for the Lords, and for Conscience sake, to the one in compassion to his Members to the other in Obedience to his Will.

4. Doct. *According to the kindness which we shew shall our Reward be.* He that receiveth, and relieveth a *Prophet*, shall receive a *Prophets Reward*. As

he that receiveth and relieveth a *Righteous Man*, shall receive the *Reward of a Righteous Man*.

Verse 42. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these *little ones*, a cup of cold water only in the name of a *Disciple*, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

These Words are added by our Saviour to the former to anticipate some Objections, which might be made thereupon, as also more fully to explain the forementioned Points.

1. *Obj.* May be thus made, These Preachers and Professors of the Gospel are but mean Persons, and little in esteem, what great Reward can be expected for entertaining them?

A. As little as they be, be they as inconsiderable and contemptible as the proud World make them, yet are they not so little in the Eyes of the Lord, but that he will reward all such as are friendly to them.

2. *Obj.* I my self am but poor, and can do but little for them.

A. Though thy kindness be never so small, as small as a cup of Water, and that cold, taken out of the River, without any pains or cost to heat it, yet but ONE Cup full thereof, and no more (supposing that to be the most thou canst do for them) yet it shall be rewarded by him, who more respecteth the willingness of the Giver, than the greatness of the Gift.

The greatest difficulty in the words is, who are here meant by *little ones*, for whose sake the Reward is promised.

By *little ones*, our Saviour meaneth no other than such in the foregoing Verse, he had filed *Prophets* and *Righteous ones*.

They are called *little ones* in two respects.

1. In regard of the World's esteem of them.
2. In regard of their own account of themselves.

First, They are little in the Worlds Eye. - The World which judgeth not according to inward

worth, have them in low esteem. It fares with the Servants, as it fared with their Master, they are despised and rejected, and trodden under foot of Men. Of old they are accounted *desolate and forsaken*, Isa. 62. 4. In the *Apostles* time, the *filth of the World*, the *offscouring of all things*, 1 Cor. 4. 13. Experience of all Ages verifieth as much. And among other Ages ours giveth not the least Evidence.

That Comfort and Contentment which God's People find in the Lord, and the Light of his Countenance, yea that hope they have of finding Grace in his Eyes, make them the less to mind, and seek after the Honour, Wealth and Promotions of the World, and commonly they have but little of it. Now the World judgeth according to outward, Earthly and Worldly Glory, it discerneth not the Spiritual Glory of the Saints, 1 John 3. 1. Judge not of Men according to the Worlds Judgment: Think not ever the more meanly of Saints, because the World thinks so of them. They are highly favoured of the most High: They are such of whom the World is not worthy, They are the *excellent ones*, Psal. 26. 3. But whatever they be indeed in the Eye of the World they are but *little ones*.

Secondly, *They are little in their own Eyes*, Gen. 18. 27. We read how *Abraham* in speaking to God, styles himself no better than *Dust and Ashes*. And Gen. 32. 10. *Jacob* acknowledgeth himself *unworthy*, or, *less than the least of God's Mercies*.

The ground thereof may be, because the Saints best know themselves, since they more thoroughly than other Men, search their Hearts, and observe their ways, and compare themselves with the pure and perfect Law of God, and take notice of their inward secret Corruptions, as well as of their outward and visible Transgressions: And thus come they

they to know more of themselves, than any other can, or may suspect of them. And this clearer sight of themselves brings them down, and lays them low. This made St. Paul to cry out, *Rom. 7. 24. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* This is a note of true grace, and of a sanctified heart. They are the *poor in spirit*, not the proud in Spirit, that are Christ's blessed ones, *Mat. 5. 3.* The false Disciple thinketh highly of himself, and would be accounted not *μικρός* a little one, like a true Disciple of Christ; but *μέγας τίς* some great one, like to Simon Magus, *Acts 8. 8, 9.* This Spirit is a Satanical Spirit. Try the Spirit by this note, whether it be of God, or no.

But though all the Servants of God are on the forementioned account *little ones*, yet there are some among them less than others, as in regard of their Offices, and Stations in the Church, some are in higher, others are in lower Offices, some are in Office, others not; so also in regard of their Parts and Gifts, and Graces, some are strong, and others are weak; some the chief, others the least of Saints: Some as the head, and others but as the finger, or the foot: And 'tis probable the Text hath the most special respect (and the Emphasis of it is the greater) to the least of all these little ones, and so the Expression is, *Matth. 25. 40.* In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done unto me.

This I the rather take notice of, to give an hint to Christians in their Charitable Distributions to have an eye to such Ministers or Christians as are more obscure, and less considerable in the World. Possibly when those of greater Worth and Remark may tast deeply of their Bounty, every one almost hath a kindness for them: In the mean time there may be some poor hidden ones, whose worth is less,

but their wants are greater, who being low in those gifts or graces which would commend them to the more publick notice, are almost buried in forgetfulness. It's true that by how much the more eminent the Person is that is relieved (*ceteris paribus*) by so much the more excellent the work: Yet special care should be taken that the more obscure and least deserving among all that belong to God be not forgotten.

The words thus explained, afford unto us two special Points of Doctrine.

1. Doct. *God taketh notice of every of his Saints, even of the least of them, and of kindness shewed to them.*

Though *Joseph* was but a lad, and sold as a slave, yet being one of the Church, one of the little ones, *minimorum minimus*; yet in *Agypt* God takes notice of him, and of that kindness which was shewed to him, *Gen.* 32. 5. Many other like examples are noted in the Scripture; but none more fit for our purpose than the Example of *Lazarus*, *Luke* 16. 20. Though he were a poor beggar, and full of sores, and despised of *Dives*, and all his Household, yet God took such notice of him, as he made his Angels attend him. Yea God took notice of the kindness which the Dogs shewed him, for their licking of his sores, is recorded to all Ages. Note, those Expressions of the Psalmist, *Psal.* 40. 12. *But I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me.* And again, *Psal.* 34. 6. *This poor Man cryed, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.*

Quest. If you ask, why the Lord taketh notice of every of his Saints.

Ans. 1. *They are all his Children, and of his Household*; therefore as a tender, and careful Father and Master, he careth for every one. Yea they are all Members of the Body of Christ. Now the Head
 taketh

taketh care of every Member, even the least, and taketh notice of every kindness done to any of them.

2. *They are all by reason of Grace in them, as Jewels and precious Stones*; therefore as a provident Jeweller he will look to every one of them. Yea that often which appeareth least may be of greater worth; as a little *Diamond* is of more value than a far greater Pebble.

This affordeth a singular ground of Comfort to such as in this World are desolate, and forsaken: Though they be left alone (as *Elijah was*, 1 Kings 19. 10) And as a *Publican in the Wilderness*: Or an *Owl of the Desert*, Or as a *Sparrow alone upon the House top*, as the *Psalmist* expresseth, *Psal. 102. 6, 7*. Yet is the Lord with them, and takes care of them. Now if the Lord be with us, and taketh care of us, what need we fear? How should this encourage us to extend our Charity to any one of the Saints and Members of Christ, though mean and little in the World, and not able to recompense us; and though none take notice thereof, to consider that the Lord taketh notice, and will abundantly recompense every good Work, yea the least kindness we do unto them. *Heb. 6. 10. God is not unrighteous to forget your work, and labour of love, which ye have shewed towards his name, in that ye have Ministered to the Saints, and do Minister.* Where, *God's not forgetting their labour of love in ministering to the Saints*, doth imply, that as God taketh notice of their Beneficence; So he is, and will be ever mindful of such and such Persons to support and succour, and every way to do them good.

And if God will thus remember those that remember the least of his, how will he take it that they are neglected? Beloved, how is it with God's little ones at this day? Is it not very low with many of them? God takes notice how very low it is; and whether you will or no, God will not forsake them; but that I may use the words of *Mordecai to Esther*,

with some variation, (*Eſther* 4. 14.) If you a'toge-
ther hold your hand at this time, relief ſhall ariſe
to them ſome other way, but you and your houſe
(take heed that word be not verified upon you)
ſhall be deſtroyed. But who knows whether you are
come to your Eſtates for ſuch a time as this?

And thus I come to the ſecond and main point of
Doctrine, which ariſeth from the Reward promiſed
to ſuch as ſhew the leaſt kindneſs to a *Minifter*, or
Righteous Man, though it be but a cup of cold Water,
they ſhall in no wiſe loſe their Reward. Whence we
may obſerve.

2. Doct. That the leaſt work of Charity ſhewed to a
Minifter or *Righteous Man*, ſhall be abundantly recom-
penſed, and that not only hereafter, but likewiſe here
on Earth.

Though our Beneficence ought to extend unto all
who are in want and come within the Verge of
our Knowledge and Power, as *Gal.* 6. 10. *Ac-*
cording as we have opportunity, let us do good unto ALL
Men; yet I confine my diſcourſe here to *Minifters*,
and *Righteous ones*, becauſe they only are employed
under thoſe little ones mentioned in my Text.

That merciful Men ſhall be abundantly recom-
penſed hereafter in Heaven for their Works of Cha-
rity, there is no doubt, being ſo clearly expreſſed
in the word of God, *Luke* 16. 9. *Make your ſelves*
friends of the Mammon of unrighteouſneſs, that when
ye fail, they may receive you into everlaſting habita-
tions, And 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. *Charge them that are rich*
in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good
works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate,
laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation a-
gainſt the time to come, that they may lay hold of
eternal life.

But the great queſtion is concerning temporal Re-
ward, whether Chriſtian Charity, rightly perform'd,
ſhall be recompenced here in this life with temporal
Bleſſings; So that what Men give in a way of Cha-
rity,

riches, there is ground to expect, it shall be here returned into their Bosoms again with increase.

I deny not but a charitable Man may become poor, and be reduced into some Straights, through Suretiship, negligence in his Calling, or in respect of some secret Sin, wherein he liveth, which may justly bring a temporal curse upon him: So that his Liberality in such Cases may not be a sufficient Fence against Want and Penury. But this I say, *That a Penuriousness towards the Poor is the readiest way to Poverty: So Christian Charity, rightly performed, is the surest way to Plenty and Abundance*, it being usually rewarded with Temporal Blessings here, as well as with Eternity hereafter. Where is the Man to be found, that is the poorer by what he hath given to the Poor? How many are the Instances of such which have met with some signal Blessings from God in this life, as the Reward of their Liberality?

This may seem a Paradox to many uncharitable Men, that *Giving should be the surest way of getting*, and that *the more liberal any Man is, the more likely he is to thrive and prosper in the World*. Yet nothing more clearly laid down in the Scripture, and found to be true by the Experience of Multitudes of God's People in all Ages. And I am verily perswaded, that there is seldom any Man, that maketh conscience of this Duty, who giveth out to the Poor proportionably to what God hath bestowed on him, and with an honest and upright Heart, but if he do observe the Passages of God's Providence towards him, he shall find the same doubled, and redoubled upon him in Temporal Blessings, I dare challenge all the World to give me one Instance, or at least any considerable number of Instances of any truly merciful Men, whose Charity hath undone them. But as living Wells the more they are drawn, the more freely they spring and flow; so the Substance of charitable Men doth oftentimes, if not, ordinarily, multiply in the very Distribution; even as the

five

five Loaves, and few Fishes did multiply in their breaking and distributing. And the Widows Oyl increased by the pouring it out.

But these bare Assertions being no full Convictions: For the better clearing the Truth of this Doctrine, I shall prove it by *Scripture, Examples and Reasons*.

1. For *Scripture Proofs*, there are very many both the Old and New Testament. What the Apostle saith in *Godliness*, 1 Tim. 4. 8. *It is profitable unto all things, having the promise of this life, and of that which is to come.* The like I may say of *Charity*, it is profitable unto all things, having Promises of *Temporal Blessings*, as well as of *Spiritual and Eternal*.

Deut. 15. 10. *Thou shalt surely give unto thy brother, and thy heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.* It is not thine own Labour, or Care, but the Divine Blessing that maketh rich, and of that Blessing behold here's a *Scripture-entail* upon the Liberal. And the like we have, Prov. 3. 9, 10. *Honour the Lord with thy Substance* by giving out a Portion thereof for the Relief of the Poor, *So shall thy Barns be filled with plenty, and as thy Barns, so thy Shop, thy Cellars, Warehouses, where thou bestowest thy Goods, be filled with abundance: And thy Presses shall burst out with new Wine,* this seemeth to be an Hyperbolical Expression, yet it signifies no less than this, *that God's usual way is to make good returns of all we lay out upon him and his; and that our wisest way both for ensuring and improving what we have is to make our selves Creditors to his wanting Saints.*

A compassionate Heart, and an helping hand will gather by expending; such giving is getting, such Bounty is the most compendious way to Plenty. Whereupon the wise Man addeth, Prov. 11. 24.

There

There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. Who is he here that scattereth? Not he that wasts his Estate upon his Throat, his Back and his Belly, or with the Prodigal upon Harlots; but he that casteth his Bread upon the Waters, as the Expression is, *Ecc. 11. 1. He that disperseth and giveth to the Poor,* as *Psal. 112. 9.* This is the scatterer in that Text. And what of him? Is he wasted? Is he impoverished? Behold the quite contrary: The Man is grown rich, *he is increased by scattering.* Let him look to it, that withholdeth more than is meet: This is the more likely Man of the two to be found shortly on the Dunghil. If thou wilt secure thy self from Beggary, keep not God's Beggars from thy Door, nor send away empty whose Needs, though not their Tongues, cry in thine Ears, *Give for the Lord's sake.* Fear not to loose by laying out. Thy laying up what thou shouldst lay out hath the most danger in it. The Divine Curse may wither that in thine hand which thou holdest fast against the divine Command.

In the following Verse we read farther, *The liberal Soul shall be made fat.* The Soul is often in Scripture taken to signify the Man, and so it is here, and is the same, as the *liberal Man.* *To be made fat,* signifies *to prosper, to be full, and abound, or to grow rich in this Worlds Goods;* and thus it shall be, if this Scripture may be credited.

[The *liberal Soul*] it is in the *Hebrew*, as you may find it noted in the Margin, *the Soul of Blessing,* the merciful Man is a Blessing, and hath a Blessing for such as need him: And he that is a Blessing, shall be blessed; the Lord God shall bless him with an increase of his Substance, who hath most emptied himself for him and his. It's true that the SOUL of the Liberal properly taken, shall be a gainer by his Liberality; no more thriving Christians, then the merciful Christians, what they expend in

in Temporals is abundantly returned in Spirituals. But because there is so much of *Carnal*, even in too many Christians, and we have need of Encouragements suited to our tempers therefore to our Spiritual Advantages, which are the greatest these outward Encouragements are added as often most taking with our too carnal Hearts. So that this is the Sense of the place. The liberal Man, as the Reward and Encouragement of his Liberality, shall prosper in the World. And as it follows, *He that watereth*; the Soul of the Needy, his Waters shall not fail, but he *shall be watered also himself*. God will give in to him, according as he hath given out to others.

And for their farther Encouragement, saith the wise Man, *Pro. 19. 17. He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given shall he pay him again*. If that which thou givest be repaid thee again, how can it be said to be lost? Indeed the Poor, unto whom thou givest, are not able to repay thee again, yet having such an all-sufficient Surety, as God himself, who hath undertaken the Repayment, thou need'st not doubt thereof. Oh happy is that Man that becomes a Creditor to his Creator, and makes God his Debtor! whose is the Earth, and the fulness thereof? Heaven and Earth shall be emptied before he shall want a Royal Payment.

Fear not to be an Usurer, so thou lendest unto God, make him thy Debtor, and he will surely pay thee Principal and Interest. Allow him his time (for that he will have) and he will not only pay the Debt, but allow thee for the forbearance. The ungodly borroweth, and payeth not again; but this shall never be said of the righteous God: He is just, and will make good Payment of whatsoever is lent unto him.

It is true, the Lord loves to deal upon Trust, and uses to make Payment by way of Returns. He will be

be trusted, and those that will not give him Credit, let them, if they can, put their Estates into surer Hands. And he uses to pay by the way of *Returns*, it may be neither in the same kind, nor in the same Country. Sometimes 'tis so that he pays not in the same kind, Bread for Bread, or Clothes for Clothes, or Money for Money. Nor possibly may he make his Payment in this Foreign Land, where thou art a Merchant-Adventurer, but may give thee his Bill of Exchange to receive it in thine own Country, that better Country which is thy Home and Inheritance, which shall be the Reward of thy Works, and Labour of Love, which thou shewest to his Name. And if he do thus, does he thee any wrong? Is it not best for thee that thou receive thy Goods at thy Home? Is it any harm for thee to receive Silver for thy Brass, Gold for thy Silver, Rubies for thy Gold, a Treasure in Heaven, for thy Treasure on Earth? Doubt not that he will be behind hand with thee; yet stick not if thou shouldst be put to it, to wait for Payment in full till hereafter; and for the present this thou mayst depend upon from *Prov. 28. 27. He that giveth to the poor shall not lack*, he shall have in Hand what's needful at least. *He shall not lack*, and there may be more in this Word, than if he had said, I will presently pay thee all: For all that thou hast, if thou shouldst hold it never so close, cannot secure thee from ever coming to want; as great as thy abundance is, thou mayst come to want before thou diest. But what thy abundance cannot do, this promise of God can and doth for thee even give thee security that thou shalt never lack.

Again, *Eccles. 11. 1. Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.* By Bread is here meant all things necessary for the Support of Mens Lives. And by casting their Bread upon the Waters, is meant their giving freely of that which they have for the Relief of the Poor, whose watry

watry Eyes bewray their great necessity. And though that which thou bestowest on them, may seem to be as clearly lost and cast away, as that which is thrown down the River, or cast into the Sea, where there is no likelihood of receiving it again, because given to those who can no ways recompence thee; whence arose that Greek Proverb, *εἰς ὕδωρ σπείγεις* Thou sowest upon the Water, which is usually apply'd to such as bestow Kindnesses where they are utterly lost.

Yet thou shalt find it after many days, *Lavater in locum* saith, that there is imply'd a Promise of long Life to the Charitable, that God will lengthen out his days to a good old Age. Tho' this falls out true in many, yet I conceive it not to be here intended, nor to be the meaning of the words, but rather, this, that though thy reward doth not presently appear, yet if thou bestowest thine Alms with a sincere Heart, it shall not be lost, but certainly be returned into thy Bosom with an increase.

Yet further saith the Lord by the Prophet, *Isa.* 58. 7, 8, &c. *If thou deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the poor that are cast out, to thy house, and when thou seest the naked, if thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy self from thine own flesh, by turning thy Face from him; Then* (see what a gracious Promise of signal Blessings follow hereupon) *shall thy Light break forth as the Morning, that is, then shall the Night of thine Adversity be dispelled, and the Day-spring of thy Prosperity break forth as the Morning-light; and thy righteousness shall go before thee, that is, the Fruit and Reward of thy Charity shall be visible to all; the Glory of the Lord shall be thy Reward, that is, the God of Glory shall be his Power and Providence, both to go before thee, and follow thee with his Blessing. And, verse 10. If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, that is, afford that hearty Relief unto him, which shall*

shall satisfy his Necessity, then shall thy Light rise in Obscurity, thy Adversity shall be turned into Prosperity. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy Soul in droughts, as thou didst satisfy the poor Man's Soul by supplying his Wants, so the Lord will supply thee with a sufficiency in the greatest Dearth and Famine; and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be as a watered Garden, and a little Spring of water, whose Waters fail not; an Emblem of a flourishing and prosperous Estate, which doth usually follow, and accompany merciful Men.

Yea, our blessed Saviour, *Matth. 19. 29.* promisseth that such as for his sake shall this or any other way part with their Estates, or any part or portions of them, shall receive an hundred fold here, and inherit eternal Life hereafter; here in this Life he shall have the return of an hundred fold, which many Christians have found true in their own experience, and with thankfulness to God have acknowledged as much.

And what variety of Expressions doth our Saviour use in *Luke 6. 38.* to assure us of a large Reward here of all our Labour and Love shewed to his Ministers, and Members? Give, saith he, and it shall be given to you again, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over. For your Encouragement unto this Duty of giving to the Poor, our Saviour first annexeth a general Promise of return, Give, and it shall be given to you again, where he giveth you a Bill of his Hand, that you shall be no looser by what you give to his Poor but shall be repay'd, and that with advantage, as the following words declare, You shall have good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over; we account it good Measure, when it is heaped up, but when it is not only heaped up, but pressed down, that is more; but when it is heaped up, pressed down, and then heaped up, and running over again, who can but say, that this is good Measure indeed? Yet thus God
deals

deals with merciful Men, they shall have Mercies and Blessings *beaped up, pressed down, and running over.* How truly then may I take up the words of the Psalmist, *Blessed is he that considereth the poor*; He shall not only be blessed, but he shall have Blessings *beaped up, and running over!* which the Apostle St. Paul expresseth very *Emphatically* by the Similitude of Reaping and Sowing, 2 Cor. 9. 6. *He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly, but he which soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully.* As Men sow, so shall they reap, the more liberally they give to good Uses, the more bountifully they shall receive from God: They shall find a plentiful Harvest, as the Fruit of all their Costs and Pains. Dr. Hammond in his Practical Catechism, quoting these Words of the Apostle, *He that soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully*, addeth
 “ this Gloss, *By reaping bountifully, I conceive is*
 “ *meant, not only God’s abundant Retributions of Glo-*
 “ *ry in another World, but even his Payments of Tem-*
 “ *poral Pleny, and Blessings here to those who have*
 “ *been willing to make that Christian Use of that earli-*
 “ *ly Talent committed to their Stewarding.*

Thus you see there are so many Promises both in the Old and New Testament of *Temporal*, as well as of *Spiritual and Eternal Blessings* to the Merciful, that there can be no question made of the Truth of the Doctrine. And to use the Expression of the foremention’d Doctor; *By all those Testimonies from the Word of God, both in the New and Old Testament, I conceive this Doctrine as clear as any in the Scripture*;
 “ *That the Promise of Temporal Pleny to the Libe-*
 “ *ral is so distinct and infallible, that it can be no less*
 “ *than,*

1. *A very gross Ignorance of plain Scripture not to observe it, and*

2. *An Act of arrant Infidelity, not to believe it.*

Tho’ these Proofs of Scripture are sufficient to convince any Christian of the Truth of the Doctrine, yet for your farther Satisfaction, I shall briefly

briefly give you the Judgment both of some ancient Fathers, and modern Divines concerning the same.

Non qui habet & servat, sed qui imperit est Dives, & imperitio, non autem possessio divites facit. Clemens Alexand. Pædag. lib. 3. Not he that possesseth Wealth, and keeps it by him, but he that distributeth it, is rich; neither is it the having, but the laying out of Riches, that makes Men rich.

Terrena omnia Servando amittimus, largiendo servamus. Isidorus. We loose all earthly Things by keeping them, and by giving them away we keep them.

Lucrum est egeris dare, saith St. Basil. It's the best way of Thriving to give to them that are in want.

Fecundus est ager pauperum, cito reddit donantibus fructum. Aug. Serm. de Divite. The Field of the Poor is very fruitful, and quickly yieideth an Increase to the Charitable.

The same Father in his 25th Sermon, *de verbis Domini*, brings in Christ speaking thus, *Da mihi eo quod dedi tibi, habuisti me largitorem, fac me debitorem, &c.* Give to me of that which I have given to thee; I have been thy Benefactor, make me thy Debtor, become an Usurer to me, and I will pay thee with advantage. And in one of his Epistles, *Da modicum ut recipias centuplum.* Give a little, and thou shalt receive an hundred fold.

Da pauperi ut detur tibi, quicquid pauperi dederis tu habebis, quod non dederis, habebit alter. Give to the Poor, and it shall be given to thee. Whatsoever thou givest to the Poor, thou securest to thy self; what thou withholdest, another shall possess. *Pet. Raven. Serm. quodam.*

Deus his solvit hoc sænus, scilicet semel in terra, Secundo in cælo. In terra enim eleemosynariis multiplicat opes, in cælo autem longe plura, & majora rependis. God twice pays what's lent to him, once in this World,

World, by multiplying the Wealth of Alms-givers; and then in Heaven he pays it over and over. *Cornelius alapid. Pro. 19. 17.* Dr. Hammond, in his Sermon on *Deut. 26. 12, 13.* layeth down this Proposition, 'That *Alms-giving or Mercifulness* was never the *wasting or lessening* of any Man's Estate, to *Himself* or his *Posterity*, but rather the *encreasing* of it. And thereupon addeth, if I have delivered a *new Doctrine*, which will not presently be believed, such as every Auditor will not consent to, I doubt not but there be plain Texts of Scripture, more then one, which will assure every Christian of the Truth of it. Consider them at your Leisure *Psal. 14. 1, 2. Psal. 112.* all to this purpose. *Prov. 11. 25. & 12. 9. & 19. 17. & 28. 27.* Add to these the Words of Christ, *Mark 10. 30* which though more generally delivered of any kind of parting with Possessions for *Christ's sake*, are apply'd by Saint Hierom, to the Words of Solomon, *Prov. 11. 24. There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth, quia centuplum accipiunt in hoc tempore*, because, saith he, they receive an hundred fold in this World. All these being put together, must saith he, (to my understanding) make it as clear to any that acknowledge these for Scripture, as if God should call to a Man out of Heaven by Name, and bid him *relieve that poor Man, and he should never be poorer for it, &c.* Afterwards in pressing upon his Auditors the Duty of Alms-giving. 'This saith he *I am resolved on*, 'tis want of Belief, and nothing else, that keeps Men from the Practice of this Duty. Could this one Mountain be removed, the *lessening of our Wealth*; that Alms-giving is accused of; could that one Scandal to Flesh and Blood be kicked out of the way, there is no other Devil would take the unmerciful Man's part, no other Temptation molest the Alms-giver. And let me tell you, that you have no more Evidence for the Truth of Christ coming, for all the Fundamentals

‘*damentals of your Faith*, on which you are content
‘ your Salvation should depend, then such as I have
‘ given you for your Security in this point.

Dr. *Jeremy Taylor* in his *Rules of Holy living*,
treating of *Alms*, *Seet. 8.* among other *Motives*
thereunto, hath this ‘ That Portion of our estate out
‘ of which a Tenth or a Fifth, a Twentieth, or some
‘ Offering to God for Religion, and the Poor goes
‘ forth, certainly returns with a great Blessing upon
‘ all the rest. It is like the Effusion of Oyl by the
Sidonian Woman, as long as she pours into empty
Vessels, it could never cease running: Or like the
Widow's Barrel of Meal, it consumes not as long as
she fed the Prophet.

Mr. *Hildersham* in his 22d Lecture on *Psalms 25.*
speaking of *Alms giving*, saith, ‘ It is a Duty that
‘ God hath made greater promises unto, than to any
‘ other almost that a Christian can perform. And three
sorts of Promises there be that are made unto it.
First, That it shall never binder, nor begger a Man
that that is thus given shall not be lost, yea it will return
again with Advantage and increase: Yea that
that is thus given will bring God's Blessing upon all
that we have besides, *Deut. 15. 10.*

Dr. *Thomas Jacomb*, in his Sermon on *Matth. 5. 7.*
Preached at the *Spittle*, 1657, saith, God will return
to the merciful Man what he gives to the Poor, he
will reward him *in kind*, that look whatever it is that
he bestows, it shall be *in the very kind* made up to him
again; many have found this to be true: In the
Morning they have given, may be, five Shillings, and
before Night God hath brought them in unexpectedly
twenty for it. The best way for a Man to encrease
his Estate is *Charity*: Money here like the widdows
Oil, the more 'tis poured out, the more it doth
increase, &c. And p. 26. No Man shall be the
Poorer at the Years end for what he lays out upon
the Poor; you shall have your Money again, and
improvement for it too.

‘ The

The Author of the *whole Duty of Man*, treating
 of Alms in Partition 17. saith, There is but one
 Objection to be made against a cheerful giver of
 Alms, and that is, *The danger of improverishing
 ones self by what one gives.* To which he answers
 in these words; that this is sure a vain Supposition
 God having particularly promised the contray to
 the Charitable: *That it shall bring blessings on them,
 even in these outward things, The liberal soul shall
 be made fat, and he that watereth, shall be watered
 also himself,* Prov. 28. 25. *He that giveth to the
 poor, shall not lack,* Prov. 11. 27. And many the
 like Texts there are, so that one may truly say,
 This Objection is grounded in direct unbelief.
 The short of it is, we dare not trust God, for this
 giving to the Poor, is directly the putting our
 Wealth into his Hands: *He that giveth to the poor,
 lendeth unto the Lord,* Prov. 19. 17. and that too
 on solemn Promise of Repayment, as it follows
 in that Verse, *That which he hath given will he pay
 him again.* It is amongst Men thought a great
 Disparagement, when we refuse to trust them;
 it shews we either think them not sufficient
 or not honest. How vile an Affront is it then
 to God thus to distrust him. Nay indeed, how
 horrid Blasphemy, to doubt the Security of that
 for which he thus expressly past his word, who is
 the Lord of all, and therefore cannot be Insuffici-
 ent: And who is the God of Truth, and therefore
 will not fail to make good his Promise? Let not
 then that Infidel-fear of future-want contract and
 shut up thy Bowels from thy poor Brother; for tho'
 he be never like to pay, yet God becomes his
 Surety, and enters Bond with him, and will most
 assuredly pay thee with Increase.

Therefore it is so far from being damage to
 thee thus to give, that it is *thy great Advantage.*
 Any Man would rather chuse to put his Money in
 some sure Hand, where he may both improve, and
 be

be certain of it at his Need, than to let it lie unprofitable by him, especially if he be in danger of Thieves, or other Accidents, by which he may probably lose it: Now alas! all that we Possess is in eminent danger of losing: Innumerable Accidents there are, which may in an instant bring a rich Man to beggary; he that doubts this, let him but read the Story of *Job*, and he will there find an Example of it. And therefore what so prudent Course can we take for our Wealth, as to put it out of the reach of those Accidents, by thus lending it to God, where we may be sure to find it ready at our greatest Need, and that too with Improvement and Increase? In which respect it is, that the Apostle compares Almes to Seed, 2. Cor. 9. 10. We know it is the Nature of Seed that is sown, to multiply and increase; and so do all our Acts of Mercy, they return not single, and naked to us, but bring in their Sheaves with them, a most plenteous and bountiful Harvest. God deals not with our Aims, as we too often do with his Graces, wrap them up in a Napkin, so that they shall never bring in any Advantage to us, but make us most rich Returns. And therefore we have all reason, most cheerfully, yea joyfully, to set to this Duty, which we have such Invitations to, as well in respect of our own *Interest*, as our Neighbours needs.

Thus have you the Truth of the Point proved both by Divine and Human Testimonies. I should now proceed to give you some Instances for the farther Confirmation thereof. But I must beseech you first to take these two *Cautions*.

1. *Not to ascribe the reward to any Merit of your good Works, but only to the free Grace, and rich Mercy of God.* It is his rich Mercy, that we have where-withal to give, and his free Grace, that we have an heart to give, and his abundant Goodness, that he accepteth our Works of Charity, and rewardeth them

them with all sorts of Blessings, both Temporal, Spiritual and Eternal; but we cannot merit any thing at his Hands by giving him that which is his own.

2. *Though our Alms-deeds are Sacrifices acceptable and well pleasing unto God through Christ*; and though he hath bound himself by many gracious Promises to reward the same both here, and hereafter: Yet far be it from us to perform them merely out of hope of Reward, but rather for *Conscience sake*, in *Obedience to the Command of God* (who hath required them at our Hands) and in *Testimony of our Thankfulness unto him*, for what he hath graciously bestowed on us. As we are commanded to obey the Magistrate, not so much for *fear of Punishment*, and *hope of Reward*, as for *Conscience sake*, in obedience to the Command of God, Rom. 13. 5. So ought we to distribute our Alms, not so much for the Reward sake, as out of Conscience, for the Lord's sake.

I deny not but Christians in their well-doing may for their Encouragement have respect to the Recompence of Reward, but not *only*, and *chiefly*. The chief and principal Ends we should aim at in all our good Works, are, *The Glory of God*, and *Obedience to his Command*. Our Respect to the Recompence of Reward ought to be subordinate unto these. The truth is, this Temporal Reward should not so much be looked on, as an *Argument* to perswade us to give, but as an Answer of an Objection against Giving. Thou wilt be ready to say, I may want it my self, or mine may want it. But do but believe, that God will repay thee, and with Overplus; and then that doubt will be taken out of the way.

These two Cautions premised, I shall proceed in the Confirmation of the Point from the Examples of many charitable Persons, who have in Temporal Mercies been abundantly recompensed for the Kind-

ness they have shewed to the Ministers and Members of Christ.

The **Widow of Sareptah** nourished the Prophet **Elijah** in her House during the whole Time of Famine; and how did the Lord abundantly recompense this her Charity, by his miraculous preserving and encreasing her Meal and Oyl, whereby her Family was nourished. As also by restoring her Son to life again, after his Soul was departed? **2 Kings 17. 22.** And by causing the Prophet to continue with her many Months, to feed her Soul with Spiritual, as she had his Body with carnal Food.

How abundantly was the **Skunamite's** Kindness to the Prophet **Elisha**, recompensed?

1. By the gift of a Son after long barrenness.
2. By restoring her Son to life again when he was dead. **2 Kings 16.**
3. By the forewarning her of a famine approaching, **2 Kings 8. 1, 4.**

4. By the restoring of her house and land, lost in her long absence; by reason of the famine, **2 Kings 4. 24.**

Notable is the instance of **Job**. What a merciful Man he was, we may read, **Chap. 29. 12, 13, 15.** I delivered the poor that cryed, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widows heart to sing for joy. I was Eyes to the Blind, and feet I was to the lame, I was a father to the poor. And **Chap. 31. 16, and 22.** If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail, or have eaten my morsel alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; if I have seen any perish for want of cloathing, or any poor without covering; if his eyes have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the Fleece of my Sheep: Then let mine Arms fall from my Shoulder-blade, and mine Arm be broken from the Bone. I have transcribed his own words thus at large, that I might set this worthy pattern before the Readers eyes.

But you will say, what became of this merciful Man? Did he prosper? Did he flourish and grow great? Who so poor as poor *Job* after all these Acts of Mercy? How long after was it, that we find this merciful Man a miserable Man, strip'd naked of all that ever he had? But, first, It was not his own Mercy, but *Satan's Malice* that brought him down. It was the *Devil* that set the *Sabeans*, and *Chaldeans* upon him, to plunder and carry away all that he had. And Secondly, what became of *Job* afterwards, after *Satan* had done his worst? You may read, *Chap. 42. 10, &c.* That the Lord turned the Captivity of *Job*, and gave him twice so much as he had before, and blessed his latter end more than his beginning, for he had fourteen thousand Sheep, and six thousand Camels; a thousand yoke of Oxen, and a thousand shee Asses; he had also seven Sons and three Daughters. *Acts 28. 7.* We read how *Publius* the chief Man of the Island of *Melita* (into which *St. Paul*, and many others with him were cast by Ship-wrack) received and lodged them three days courteously. And in the next Verse we read how the Father of *Publius*, when he lay desperately sick of a Fever and Bloody-flux, was recovered by *St. Paul*, and restored to his former Health. So likewise the Kindness which the barbarous People of that Island shewed unto *Paul* and his Fellow-travellers, was recompensed with the Cure of many of their sick Bodies.

To these Examples, recorded in Scripture, I shall add a few more out of ancient and modern Writings.

St. Aban (whom *Mr. Fox* in his first Tome mentioned amongst the Martyrs who suffered for the Name and Cause of Christ) having received a persecuted Minister into his House, was by his Godly Life and Gracious Exhortations so wrought upon that he turned from *Heathenism* to *Christianity*, and at last suffered as a Martyr for the Truth of Jesus Christ.

Christ, as *Beda*, and others write of him. His kindness to a poor Persecuted Minister was recompensed not only with his Conversion to the true Religion, but likewise with the honour of Martyrdom.

St. *Austin*, having set forth the Mercifulness and Liberality of *Constantine* the Great, saith, *Bonus Deus, Constantium Magnum tantis terrenis implevit muneribus, &c.* God gave *Constantine*, that merciful Prince more Wealth than Heart could wish, for his Bounty to the Poor, *Aug. de Civitate Dei. l. 5.*

Dr. *Hammond* in his forementioned Treatise mentioneth an ancient Story out of *Cedrenus*, of a Jew, who upon reading those words of *Solomon*, Prov. 19. 17. *He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again*, resolved to try, whether God would be as good as his word: Thereupon gave all that he had but two pieces of Silver to the Poor and then waited and expected to see it come again. But being not presently answered in that Expectation, grew angry, and went up to *Jerusalem* to expostulate with God for not performing his Promise. And going on his way, found two Men striving, engaged in an unreasonable Quarrel, about a Stone, that both walking together had found in the way, and so had both equal right to it; but (being but one and not capable of being divided) they could not both enjoy: And therefore, to make them friends, he having two pieces of Silver, doth upon Contract divide them betwixt the Contenders, and hath the Stone in exchange for them. Having it, he goes on his journey, and coming to *Jerusalem*, shews it to a Goldsmith, who tells him, that it was a Jewel of great Value, being a Stone salf, and lost out of the High-Priests Ephod, to whom if he carried it, he should certainly receive a great Reward. He did so, and accordingly it proved. The High-Priest

took it of him, gave him a great Reward, and
and withal sharply reprov'd him for questioning
the Truth of God's Promises, bidding him trust
God the next time.

The Story of *Tiberius the second* is pertinent to
this Purpose, which take in the words of that Re-
verend Person before mentioned in his Sermon at
the *Spittle*. This *Tiberius* was very famous for his
Bounty to the Poor, insomuch that his Wife was
wont to blame him for it, and speaking to him
once, how he wasted his Treasure that way, he
told her. *He should never want Money, so long as*
in Obedience to Christ's Command he did supply the Ne-
cessities of the Poor. And presently see how Provi-
dence ordered it! Immediately after he had given
much this way, under a Marble Table which was
taken up he found a great Treasure, and news was
brought him too of the death of one *Narfes*, a very
rich Man, who had given his whole Estate unto him.

Famous is the Story of that charitable Bishop of
Millain, who as he was travelling with his Servant,
overtook some poor People who begged an Alms of
him: Whereupon he asked his Man what Money he
had about him, who answered, *Three Crowns*, which
he commanded him to give unto them: But the
Servant thinking himself wiser than his Master,
gave them but two Crowns, not knowing what oc-
casions they might have for Money before they got
home. Not long after some Noble-men meeting
the Bishop, and knowing him to be a very charita-
ble Man, appointed *two hundred Crowns* to be paid
to the Bishops Servant for his Masters use. The
Servant having received the Money, presently with
great joy acquainted his Master therewith, where-
upon said the Bishop, Thou mayst now see how
wronging the Poor of their due, by keeping back
the third Crown which I intended them, thou hast
likewise wronged me, *Si enim res dedisses, resce-*
accepisses, &c. If thou hadst given those three

Crowns

Crowns, as I commanded thee to give, thou hadst received *three hundred Crowns*, whereas now I have but *two*. *Melanc. apud Joh. Manlium in Lat. Com.*

It is recorded of *Mary* the Wife of *Alexander Farnese*, Prince of *Parma*, that being Childless she conceived an hope, that if she should take into her House some *Orphan*, or poor Man's Child, and there train him up, God would bestow a Son upon her. Whereupon she took a poor Man's Son into her Care, and gave order for his Education, and according to her Expectation, at nine Months end she was delivered of a Son.

Suitable likewise to this Point is the Story of one *John Stewart* Provost of *Air* in *Scotland*, who was eminent for Piety and Charity. He had a considerable Estate left him by his Father; of which he gave a great part to the Poor and other charitable Uses. To pass by many I shall mention only one. His Heart on a time being much affected with the Wants and Necessities of many of God's People, who were in a suffering Condition, he sendeth for divers of them to *Edinburgh*, where being met, and some time spent in Prayer, he made them promise not to reveal what he was about to do, so long as he lived: And then told them he was not ignorant in what a low Condition many of them were, and therefore he had brought some Money with him to lend each of them, yet so as they should never offer to repay it till he required the same; soon after this, such a Plague brake forth in *Air*, the place of his abode, that trade much decayed, and he himself with others were reduced to straits. Whereupon, Some of the Profane in that place derided him, saying, that Religion had made him Poor, and his giving so much to others, like a fool, had brought him to want. But mark what followed. Having borrowed a little Money, he departs from *Air* to *Rochel* in *France*, where Salt and other Commodities being exceeding cheap

For want of Trading, he adventured to freight a Ship, and loaded her upon Credit; and then went back again through *England* unto *Air* in *Scotland*, having ordered the Ship to come thither. But after long expectation he was informed for certain, that his Ship was taken by a Turkish man of War, the report whereof did exceedingly afflict him, not because he knew not how to be abased, as well as how to abound, but out of fear, that the mouths of wicked Men would be the more opened to the reproaching of his profession and Charity. But soon after, tidings was brought him that his Ship was safely arrived in the Road, and upon his going forth saw it was a Truth. And through God's good Providence, as a reward of his charity, he made so much of the Commodities in the Saip, that after the Payment of his Debts, he had twenty thousand Marks left for himself. Though his Bread was cast upon the Waters, and to appearance lost, yet after many days it returned to him with great advantage. This Story I lately read in a Book, called, *The Filling of the Scriptures*.

Daniel Waldow, Esquire, Citizen and Mercer, who was chosen Alderman of *London*, is a farther proof of this Doctrine before laid down, I could from mine own experience speak much of his Bounty and Charity; as also of that plentiful Estate wherewith God blessed him thereupon. But I shall rather give it you in the words of that holy Man, and blessed Servant of Christ in the Work of the Ministry, Mr. *James Nalson*, now with God, who was more intimately acquainted with Mr. *Waldow*, and therefore the more fit to Preach his Funeral Sermon, and to set forth his Life for our Imitation. His words are these, *He was a Man eminent, and exemplary in the Grace of Charity; as appeared by his great Bounty manifested on every occasion. Never any good Man, Minister or other, came to propound any Work of Charity, publick or private, that needed to do any more than to*
propound

propound it: For his Heart was so set upon Works of Mercy, that he prevented Importunity, by his Christian and Heroick Liberality. He made no more of giving ten Pounds to a Work of Charity, than many other rich Men make of giving ten Shillings. His Charity had two singular Concomitants, which made it the more remarkable and praise worthy.

1. He did good while he lived: He carryed his Lamentation before him: He made his own hands his Executors, and his own eyes his Overseers: Some will part with their Riches when they can keep them no longer: This is like a Cut purse, that being espied or pursued, will drop a Purse of Gold, because he can keep it no longer. But to be doing good in our life time, while we have opportunity; this is an Act of Faith, and an evidence that we can trust God with our Estate, and our Children, that he will provide for them, when our Heads are laid in the Grave.

2. He dispensed his Charity so secretly, without any Self-seeking, or Pharisaical Vain glory, that his left hand did not know what his right hand did. Therefore did he often go with an hundred Pounds under his Cloak to some goodly Friends, desiring them to distribute it among such honest poor People as stood in most need of Relief.

In brief, he did so much good while he lived, as if he meant to have nothing to do when he died: And yet he gave so largely when he came to die, as if he had done no good when he lived.

Many, I know, are apt to say, they have many Children, and therefore cannot give. So had Mr. Waldow; He had nine Children alive at his death, but the providing for them was no Obstruction to his Charity, nor Prejudice to his Children, but did rather entail a Blessing upon them.

M. John Walier, Citizen and Draper of London, was signally Charitable, not only at his Death, but in the whole Course of his Life, even from his younger Years. For the avoiding of Vain-glory,

his manner was, to send considerable Sums of Money to several poor Families, by the Hands of others, in whose Faithfulness he could confide. Whereupon God did not only bless him with a large Estate, but likewise gave him such Contentedness therein, that he sat down abundantly satisfied: And made a *solemn Vow and Promise unto God*, that he would give the Surplusage of his Estate, whatever it was that for the future should accrew unto him from his Calling and Employments, to charitable Uses. That you may be assured of the Truth thereof, I have here given you his own Expressions transcribed out of his last Will and Testament, which are as follows.

I thought fit to declare, that about twenty years past, when the Lord had entrusted me with a convenient Estate, sufficient to maintain my Charge, and afford fit Portions for my Wife and Children after my Decease; I resolved that what further Estate the Lord should be pleased to entrust me with, I bestow the same on Charitable Uses.

After this Vow finding his Estate wonderfully increased, he began to build *Alms-houses*; one in the Parish of St. George in Southwark, a other in St. Mary Newington; because in those Parishes he observed, there were many Blind, Lame, Distressed Poor People, and never an *Alms-house* in them. He likewise built a Chappel near one of the *Alms-houses* for the Poor People to serve God in daily. Having built his *Alms-houses*, with the Poor's Stock, he bought *Lands and Houses of Inheritance*, which he settled upon the Company of *Drapers*, as for the Relief and Support of his *Alms-people*, after his Decease; so for the performing other Charitable Gifts mentioned in his last Will and Testament. While he lived, he was wont to go himself once a Month to his *Alms-houses* in his worst Cloathes (that he might not be suspected to be the Founder of them) and gave unto the poor People their promised Allowance.

lowance. Doubtless, that is the best Charity, which *Nilus* like, hath the several *Streams thereof* seen, but the *Fountain concealed*. Having built his *Alms houses*, endowed them with a good Revenue; then with the remainder of the *Poor's Stock* (which daily increased with Gods Blessing upon his Pains and Endeavours in his Calling) he relieved *poor People*, and *Families* with considerable Sums of Money; and gave *much Bread Weekly* to the *Poor* of several *Our Parishes*. All this he did whilst yet living; besides what he gave upon the like account at his Death; which was also very considerable, as further appears by his *Will*. Notwithstanding all which, he gave and left to his *Wife* and his two *Daughters* about ten thousand Pounds. This questionless is the surest way to have our *WILLS* performed, to see them performed in our *Life-time*; in regard that many *Executors* prove *Executioners* of *WILLS*.

William Pennoyer Esquire, *Citizen* and *Merchant* of *London*, a Person wholly composed of *Mercy* and *Goodness*, *Bounty* and *Liberality*, which he expressed in the whole Course of his *Life*, even from his first setting up in the *World*. Many years before his *Death*, he turned great part of the *Stock* wherewith he *Traded* into *Lands* of *Inheritance*, to the value of *four hundred Pounds per Annum*; and being eminently *Charitable*, he lived as frugally as he could, spending about two hundred Pounds a Year upon himself, *Wife* and *Family*; and the remaining part of his *Incomes*, he wholly bestowed on *Charitable Uses*; as I have been informed by those who lived long with him, and were nearly related to him.

To give you a clear demonstration of his *Christian Charity*, and of God's recompensing the same unto him here in this *Life* with *Temporal Blessings*; I shall recite some of his *Legacies* bequeathed in his last *Will and Testament*, to *Charitable Uses*,

passing by such as he gave to his rich Kindred and Acquaintance.

To poor Ministers, Widows, and others in distress about 150 l.

To four of his poor Tenants 20 l.

Likewise 800 l. to be laid out here in Woollen-cloth, or other Commodities, to be sent to New-England, for the use of his poor Kindred there.

He gave to certain Trustees Lands to the value of twenty Pounds per annum, to pay for the teaching of forty Boys at School.

To Bristol 54 l. per annum, towards the Maintenance of a School-master, and Lecturer, to Preach a Week-day Lecture there; and to other charitable Uses.

He likewise settled 20 l. per annum on Trustees, for the teaching of forty poor Children in or near White-Chappel: And 40 s. yearly to buy Bibles for some of the Children.

He gave 12 l. per annum for the maintaining a School at the Hay in Brecknockshire: And 40 s. more yearly to buy Books for the Scholars.

As also 10 l. per annum for the maintenance of poor distressed People in the Hospital of Bethlehem in London. And 10 l. per annum to ten of the blindest, oldest and poorest Cloath-workers, at the discretion of the Master, Wardens and Assistants of the said Company for the time being.

He gave 40 l. per annum to Christ-church-hospital, for the placing out four Children yearly: And 40 s. more yearly to buy each of the Children a Bible.

Besides these, he gave to his poor kindred above two thousand Pounds by his Will.

And by a Codicil annexed therunto, he bequeathed to certain Trustees a Thousand Pounds to be given to honest poor People; as also 300 l. for Releasing poor Prisoners; which Sums have been paid into the Hands of the Trustees by Mr. Richard Loton, and Michael Davison Esq; who to their Honour have
approved

approved themselves faithful Executors to this Charitable Will.

Thomas Arnold, Citizen and Haberdasher of London: At his first setting up for himself, his Stock was not great; but being Charitably disposed, and ready to every good Work, his Estate, through God's Blessing very much encreased.

His Charity in his Life-time appeared not only by his forwardness to communicate to the Relief of such, whom he saw in want; but likewise his frequent enquiring of others, after such poor People as were over-burthened with Children, or otherwise distressed. Yea, he hired Men with Money to make it their Business to find out honest poor People, on whom he might bestow his Charity; and likewise did entrust others with considerable Sums of Money, to distribute among the poorest sort, charging them to have special respect to the honest Poor, such whom they conceived did truly fear God. That he was no loser, but a gainer by his Liberality, appeareth, in that God so blessed him in his Calling; that he attained to an Alderman's Estate, and was chosen to that Office. Yea, he gave over his Calling in the City, and withdrew himself into the Country, that he might the better mind God, and the Concernments of his Soul more, and the World with its Concerns less.

John Clark, Doctor of Physick, one of great Repute for his Learning, Piety and Charity: Some while President of the College of Physicians. His Custom was, to lay by all his Lord's-days Fees, as a Sacred Stock for charitable Uses; devoting that entirely to God, which he received on his Day; accounting it a piece of Sacrilege to appropriate it to himself, or any common use; whereupon the Lord was pleased so to prosper him in his Calling, that though at first his Practise was little, and his Estate not very great, yet afterwards his Practise so encreased, and the World so flowed in upon him, that he lived plentifully and

and comfortably and gave to his Childeren liberal Portions.

The like also was practised by *John Baibruft*, Doctor of Physick, with whom I was very well acquainted: His Lords-days Fees were constantly kept as a Bank for the Poor, and wholly devoted to, and imployed for their use; which was so far from lessening his Incomes, that by the Blessing of God upon his practise, they were greatly in few Years augmented by it. Nor though at his first coming to London, he brought little Estate with him, and here had small Acquaintance, *Yorkshire* being his Native Country, where he had spent his former Days; yet the Lord was pleased so to prosper him in his Calling, that in twenty Years time he purchased Lands of Inheritance, to the value of a Thousand Pounds per annum, to speak what I know to be certain; for in the Repute of some, his Estate at his Death was no less than two Thousand Pounds of Yearly Value.

Dr. *Edmond Trench* likewise observed the same Course, as his Wife, and divers others Friends of his do testifie. And certain it is, that this was no damage, but a great advantage to him: For he had as many Patients, as his weak Body would permit him to visit. And, though he lived at a full and plentiful rate, frequently and cheerfully entertaining Ministers and Scholars at his Table; yet did he gain a very considerable Estate, which he left to his Wife and Children; in whom not only his Memory, but his Piety still survives.

I have good ground to believe, that many other Physicians do make Conscience of this Duty; but oh that all would do the like! certainly they would be no losers thereby at the Years end but find God's Blessing upon their Calling and Estates, Prospering them in both.

And here to me occurs a Case of Conscience worthy to be enquired into, viz. Whether Physicians may lawfully appropriate unto their own private use their Lord's-days Fees; I mean those Fees which they receive from

from their *Patients* on the *Sabbath Day*.

I deny not but *Works of Mercy* may, and ought to be done on that day; for, saith the Lord, *Matth. 9. 13. I will have mercy, and not sacrifice*; that is *Mercy* rather than *Sacrifice*. And deny not, but, of the richer sort, especially, they may receive their *Fees* for their *pains*. But I much question whether, they may appropriate those *Fees* to them: In regard the Lord hath afforded us six days of seven, wherein we may and ought to follow our Callings, for our own *Livelihood*, and of those who belong unto us; but hath sanctified and set apart the *Christian Sabbath* for his own Honour and Service: And therefore it seemeth but reasonable that what accreus unto us on that day, shall be set apart and employed for his more immediate Use and Service. But I will not impose this as a necessary Duty at least upon all, in regard that Circumstances may vary; but leave it at present to the determination of their own Consciences, who are most concerned therein.

Samuel Duncbe of *Pusey*, in the County of *Berks* Esquire, a Person that according to the *Apostle's* Rule, did good to all, but especially to those of the *Houshold of Faith*. His Custom was to send Monies yearly to several Towns as to *Stow* upon the *Woolds* in *Gloucestershire*, to *Norliche*, to *Lamburn*, and others not here mentioned, for the Relief of their *Poor*. And upon the last here named, he settled *Lands* of Inheritance for ever for the same use. And to *Rumsey* in *Hampshire* he gave by Deed upon the like account a Lease of 99 Years to commence after his Decease. The *Poor* also of the said Town, whom he call'd his *Alms-people*, had during his Life, *Weekly Relief* from him, and many other Towns together with them, were large *sharers* in the like Bounty.

Several poor Children of the said Town, and likewise of those belonging to *Farringdon* he set to School.

School, and did not only pay for their Teaching but also furnished them with all such Books as were fit and convenient for them. He also caused several good Books to be Printed at his own Charge which he freely gave to the Poor, that they might the better be encouraged to read, and to acquaint themselves with the Concern of another and better Life.

He further gave considerable Sums of Money yearly for the Constant supply of Such Godly Ministers as he knew to be in want: And upon several of them he settled considerable Annuities, 10 l. 20 l. *per annum* for their Lives, besides such Legacies, which were not small, that he gave to some of them at his death.

Besides all this, his hand was ever open and ready to distribute when ever any fit occasion was offered to him; yea, such as the Enlargment of his Heart, and tenderness of his Bowels, that he could hardly pass by any whom he judged due Objects of his Charity, but he freely and bountifully contributed to their Relief.

Thus did this pious Gentleman honour God with his Substance, and adventure upon the Royal Prophets words to cast his Bread upon the Waters; which though the unbelieving World accounts but folly, and usually reckon it amongst their losses, yet he to his advantage, according to the Promise thereto annexed, found it again not after many days: This bread, like the Loaves with which Christ fed the multitude, was multiplied in his hand, and his Oyl encreased by pouring out. He was but a younger Brother, and the Estate settled upon him was but 800 l. *per annum*, or thereabouts: And yet notwithstanding, I had almost said, this excess of Charity, his Estate was so far from being ruined, or in the least impaired, as that not only the same bare measure he received, but much greater, pressed down, and running over, was meeted out to him and his posterity.

sterity. So signally did God in his life reward his Charity, wisely ordering by his good Providence, that one way or other large handfals, as over-measure, were from several hands thrown into his Bushel. There is now left to his Heirs an Estate of more than the double value of what he received from his Father, besides the Portions which he gave to all his *Daughters*, five in number, which were very considerable, to some of them more than 2000 l.

And here I hope I may, without offence, or vain glory, take liberty to mention, amongst others, the *Charity* and *Liberality* of my dear and honoured Father Dr. William Gouge, late *Pastor* of *Black-fryars*, *London*, who was eminent as in other graces, so in that of *Charity*; from him I first heard, *The tenth part of a rich mans estate to be a fit proportion to be devoted and dedicated to God for charitable Uses*. But though he commended that to others; yet by what I find in some Papers written with his own hand, I may truly say, he gave *the seventh part of all his yearly comings in*, towards the maintaining poor Scholars at the University, and the relieving poor Families and distressed Persons. And how wonderfully God blessed, as his *Ministry*, so his *outward Estate*, is so well known to all who lived in his days, that I suppose it needless for me to say any thing thereof; only I may truly apply unto him the words of the *Psalmist*, *He was ever merciful and lending, and his Seed is blessed*.

Many more instances of the like nature might here be added; some of Persons who are now with joy reaping in the other World the blessed fruit of that Seed which they had so plentifully sown in this. Others of Persons yet living amongst us, some of which have acknowledged to me, *That God hath already rewarded them an hundred-fold for what they have lent to him, by giving it to his poor*. But these already mentioned, may be abundantly sufficient to evidence

dence the truth in hand, and to encourage and provoke us in imitation of those worthies, to a more ready and conscientious practice of this great Duty, so essential to Christianity, so well pleasing to God, so creditable to our profession, so beneficial, not only in order to our eternal happiness, but our present gain, comfort and prosperity here on Earth.

The point being thus proved by *Scriptures* and *Examples*, Come we now to the Reasons for the further confirmation thereof.

1. Reason. *May be taken from the goodness and bounty of God*, which is such, that he will not suffer any work of Charity, shewed to any of his Ministers, or Children to pass away unrewarded, without a full recompence. Whereupon saith David, Psal. 62. 12. *Unto thee, O Lord, belongeth Mercy, for thou renderest to every Man according to his work.* Though God doth not render a reward to any Man for his work done, yet doth he render to every Man according to his work. Yea, God doth always exceed in his remunerations, to give evidence of his grace and bounty. God will not be in any mans debt long, but what he hath disbursed upon his account, he will speedily return into his Bosom with Advantage.

2. Reason. 2. *May be taken from the faithfulness and righteousness of God*, who having in his word graciously promised abundantly to recompence and reward our beneficence, his faithfulness and righteousness engageth him to make good what he hath promised; so that he cannot but be as good as his word. Man may be forward in promising, but slow in performing: But with God, who is the true and faithful one, *dictum & factum*, saying and doing are both alike. All his promises are *Yea and Amen* in Christ Jesus, Heb. 6. 10. saith the Apostle, *God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed towards his name, in that ye have Ministered to the Saints, and do Minister.* Here the Apostle

Apostle argueth a certainty of reward to those who minister any thing to the Saints from the *righteousness of God*, even because he is righteous, and therefore will not fail to do what he hath promised. He is not unrighteous to **FORGET**, that is, he will righteously remember; and Gods remembring, signifies the same as recompencing: As he will remember Sinners by recompencing their evil ways upon their own heads, so he will remember his Saints by returning the good that they have done into their own Bosoms.

The more to assure us of such kind of remembrance from God, the Holy Ghost mentioneth certain *Books or Roles of Remembrance written before God*, wherein the merciful deeds of his Servants are recorded. So that it is no more possible that such as are charitably given, and helpful to the poor Ministers and People of God should lose their reward, than that God himself should cease to be righteous, or be forgetful of his word.

3. Reason. May be taken from several metaphorical expressions used in Scripture, by which Alms giving is represented to us, all which imply not only a certain return, but that with increase, as **SOWING** and **LENDING**, and that upon Usury.

1. We find it set forth in Scripture by **SOWING**, 2 Cor. 9. 6. *He which soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly: And he which soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully.* This proverbial Speech the Apostle applyeth to the dispersing of Alms. Now as *Husbandmen*, who sow their Corn with a liberal hand, do usually reap a crop answerably thereunto. In like manner, such Christians as shall sow their Seed of Charity with an open plentiful hand, shall reap accordingly a plentiful crop, they shall find their Seed sown come up with Increase, yielding thirty, if not sixty, or an hundred fold here, besides eternal Life hereafter. It may be, thou mayst not presently reap the Fruit of thy Seed, and what wonder?

der? Who is there that sowes, who expects to reap the same day? The Husbandman waiteth for his harvest; wait thou on the Lord, and doubt not but an harvest will come, that will pay thee both for thy sowing and thy waiting.

2. The second *Metaphor* whereby alms-giving is set forth in Scripture is *LENDING*, and that upon use, *Prov. 19. 17. He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.* Men that lend to Men receive their own with increase: What they lay up lies dead, and possibly the Thief may break in and steal it away; but what they lend if to sure hands, comes in with advantage. How rich do some Usurers grow by this trade of lending? And tho' it be a *Paradox* that *GIVING* is a richer trade than *LENDING*, even upon use: Yet 'tis a certain truth, for *this giving* is lending: And he that lends to the Lord will find a greater income at the Years end, than he that lends to the best of Men. Therefore as one well saith, *Eleemosyna non est divitiarum dispendeum, sed discedendi potius compendium, quaestusq; omnium uberrimus*; giving to the Poor is not the way to waite our Wealth, but the Art of thriving, and the most compendious course to attain unto Riches. Though our Alms deeds seem (as the Seed sown) to perish and rot; yet believing what we see not, we shall assuredly see what we believe, and find (even here) such a fruitful increase, as we shall conclude, *that giving to charitable uses is the surest and safest way of Getting and Thriving in the World.*

Thus have you the truth of the point confirmed by *Scriptures, Example and Reasons.* Come we now to the Application.

1. *Use of Reproof of all unmerciful Men; who notwithstanding the many charges God hath laid upon us, to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willingly to communicate, to draw forth our souls to the hungry, to open our Bowels to the Needy; and the manifesta*

encouragements he hath given us in his word hereto, yet do shut up their Bowels of Compassion from them, refusing to afford them any succour or relief. Surely such have no love to Christ: For who can say he loves the Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity, when he suffers his Ministers and Members to want necessities, even Food and Rayment? Is this thy love to Christ, to suffer him to starve? It is evident thou lovest thy Money more than Christ, and so comest under that fearful *Anathema*, 1 Cor. 16. 22. If any love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be *Anathema Maranatha*: These two words though both denoting a Curse, are of two several Languages. The former word *Anathema*, is a Greek word signifying accur'd: So it is used Rom 9. 3. Gal. 1. 8. The latter is a Syriack word, as Beza observeth in his Annotation on 1 Cor. 16. 22. yet frequently used by the Jews; It signifieth, *Our Lord cometh*. *Maran* is Our Lord, and *atha* cometh; intimating that such as were under this curse, were to expect no Mercy; but to look for the dreadful coming of Christ to take vengeance of them. So that, as St. James speaketh, chap. 2. 12. *Such shall have Judgment without Mercy, that sheweth no Mercy*. How do they think to find mercy from Christ who never shewed mercy to him and his!

I will not condemn all for unmercifulness (God forbid I should) many there are (and I would to God they were more) who do contribute bountifully to the necessities both of Ministers and other poor Saints of God. But yet I have too great cause to say, that the greatest part of rich men amongst us have their Hearts hardened and their Bowels shut up, that they cannot compassionate their wants; and their hands withered, like his in the Gospel, that they cannot reach them out to any good use.

Oh that such would consider, that unmercifulness is a greater Sin than they do imagine. It was one
of

of *Sod m's* Sins which fetched down Fire and Brimstone from Heaven upon them and all their Children, *Ezek. 16. 49.* Uncharitable men are cursed as in their Life, so at their Death: But most cursed will they be at the day of Judgment. Being barren fruitless Trees in God's Orchard, they shall with the barren Fig-tree be surely cut down, and cast into unquenchable Fire.

More particularly to shew you the miseries of uncharitable Persons.

1. *They are accursed here in every thing: All they have is cursed.* So much is implied in that expression of our Saviour, *Luke 11. 41. Give alms of such things as you have and all things are clean unto you,* but without alms-giving nothing is clean unto you, that is, nothing is blessed and sanctified unto you, but all things are defiled and cursed. Not only your crosses are Curses, but your blessings are curses unto you. So God threatneth, *to curse their very blessings,* Mal. 2. 2. Though thou enjoyest abundance of this Worlds Goods, yet so long as thou art hard-hearted to the Poor and Needy, the Curse of God cleaves to thy Store and Abundance. Oh how sad and lamentable must thy conditions needs be, when those things which are not only blessings in themselves, but likewise blessed unto others, should be cursed unto thee! Surely, to be thus accursed is misery enough.

2. *As the unmerciful are cursed here, so shall they be cursed hereafter,* Jam. 2. 13. *He shall have Judgment without Mercy, that hath shewed no Mercy.* Such as have shut up their Bowels of Compassion against the necessities of the Poor, God will shut up his Bowels of Compassion against them, and let forth his fury upon them, they shall have their Portion in his Plagues and Indignation, without the least drop of pity or mercy. And at the day of Judgment Christ will say unto them, *Mat. 25. 41. Depart from*

me ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, There's their doom, and why? For I was an hungry, and ye gave me no Meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink. Oh dreadful Sentence! Every word whereof carrieth much terrour in it, and breatheth nothing but Fire and Brimstone. What! Must they depart from Christ the Fountain of Bliss and Happiness? And into everlasting Fire? Ah Wretches! Cursed indeed. For as the Prophet speaketh, Isa. 33. 14. *Who can dwell with devouring fires? Who can dwell with everlasting burnings?* An everlasting Feaver, or but an everlasting Tooth-ach, were a misery unspeakable. But what are these to the lying in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone to all eternitie? Oh methinks, the name of everlasting fire, and everlasting burnings should awaken all uncharitable men out of their security, and stir them up without any farther delay to bewail their former unmercifulness, to beg the Pardon thereof, and unfeignedly to resolve, willingly to give out of their store towards the relief of the poor, proportionably to what God hath graciously bestowed on them. It may be, thou hast a plentiful Portion of this Worlds Goods; but oh, what will it profit thee to live plentifully here, and to be eternally miserable hereafter? Seriously I cannot but stand amazed to consider, how men who do believe the words of Christ to be true, That all uncharitable men shall by him at the last day be sentenced into everlasting burning for their not feeding the hungry, nor cloathing the naked; and yet can be so hard-hearted, as not to hearken to the cry of the Poor.

3. *The misery of uncharitable Persons appeareth in this, That the wants and necessities of the poor cry loud to Heaven against them.* God hath dealt bountifully with thee, loading thee with his benefits as the Psalmist speaketh (Psal. 68. 19.) and hath given thee not only food and raiment, things needful and necessary but an abundance, an affluency of outward things,
even

even all things richly to enjoy: But how many of Christs Ministers and Members are in great want, not having wherewithal to satisfie their own and Childrens hunger? Whose Miseries like the Blood of Abel cry unto God for vengeance against thee saying, *Lord there are not a few who have enough and to spare, a liberal Portion of this Worlds Goods, while Dives they fare sumptuously every day: But what are we thy wanting Servants the better for them? Who of us are warmed with their fires, or clothed with their rayment, or so much as partake of the crumbs of their Table? We are ready to perish for want, when they are surfeited with their abundance. Is the blessing of them that are ready to perish like to come upon them? Will not thou judge them O Lord?* Certainly, these bitter and lamentable complaints cry loud in the Ears of the Almighty against such unchristian and inhuman Misers. Beware of the cry of the Poor against you: If thou wilt not hear their cries unto thee, God will hear their cries against thee.

4 *Thy unmercifulness to the poor will provoke God to reject thy most religious Exercises;* Prov. 21. 13. *Who so stoppeth his Ears at the cry of the Poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.* In which words Solomon hinteth to us two things.

1. That unmerciful men, such as turn away their Ears from the cry of the Poor, shall fall into such miseries as will bring them to their Knees, and make them cry sooner or latter. Here in this World, worldly men sometimes make many Prayers, and their Religion they hope will make amends for their inhumanity at least. And in the World to come, they shall follow their fellow *Dives* in his infernal Devotion.

2 *Though they cry, yet they shall not be heard:* Whether they cry here upon their death-beds [for mercy, or hereafter in Hell for ease, they shall not be heard. A notable instance hereof we have in *Dives*, who though he cryed not here, yet he cryed in Hell,

Hell, saying *Father Abraham have Mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his Finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame* Luk. 16. 24. But was he heard? Was his request granted? 'Twas but a small request, but yet it is denyed. Because he denyed crums of bread here in his life to the Poor, he was denyed a drop of water in Hell.

And as thy Prayers, are rejected by God, so likewise will it be in vain for thee to hear the word, or come to the Table of the Lord. All thy Religion will be in vain shall I say? Nay it will be an abomination to the Lord, whilst that accursed thing thy covetous and cruel Heart, which the Lord abhorreth (*Psal. 10. 3.*) remain within thee. Think not that one Duty will excuse the neglect of another, that thy praying may serve instead of thine Alms, that Religion shall excuse the Mercy of the Confession of thine Unmercifulness will make up the matter. The Lord abhorreth thee and all thy Sacrifices, whilst the Sacrifice of a compassionate Heart is wanting.

Oh that all uncharitable Persons would keep their Thoughts in a serious Meditation of these things: And as they desire to prevent those Judgments which accompany all merciless Men, they would put in for a share in the Mercies of the Merciful, and to that end, would put on Bowels of Pity and Compassion towards the Wants and Miseries of God's distressed ones; and stretch forth an helping hand towards their Relief, which leadeth me to a Second Use, namely, 2. Use of Exhortation, to stir up every one who have given up their Names unto Christ, to make conscience, as of every Duty commanded by him, so of this especially, which he hath so vehemently pressed upon us in his word, and encouraged us unto by many sweet and pernicious Promises. This Work of Charity is Wages, and like *Samson's Lion* it crieth Honey in the Belly of it. He who out of a Principal of Love in Obedience to God's Command shall open his

his Heart and Hand wide to the Poor, shall find God's blessing his Stock and Store, and prospering all his undertakings. As there is a *Secret Curse* goes out from God upon the uncharitable Man's Estate, which blasteth all his Projects and Undertakings, whereby they prove altogether fruitless: So there is a *Secret Blessing* goeth out from God upon the charitable Man's Estate, whereby he thrives and Prospers in the World, even to his own and Neighbours Admiration.

It is observed, that they are the Richest Merchants and Citizens who trade boldly: Whereas they who are fearful to adventure their Goods, have but small Returns. In like manner it is found by experience, that such Christians as are most forward to supply the Wants of the Poor, boldly adventuring their Goods upon the Waters, do most of all thrive and prosper in the World. When then will any Man be so unwise, as to lose his Riches for fear of losing them? And not rather seem to lose them that he may in truth find them? These earthly things are assuredly lost by keeping, and kept by well bestowing them.

What now remaineth but that you look about you where you may lay out your Money at the best advantage? Make diligent enquiry after the Poor Ministers and Members of Christ: Seek more after them than they do after you. For most certain it is, that you get more by giving unto them, than they do by receiving from you. And you are more beholden unto them for receiving your Charity, than they are unto you for giving it. Whereas you only relieve *their Bodies*, they feed *your Souls*, as Prov. 11. 17. *The merciful man doeth good to his own soul*, which is refreshed with the Mercy which he sheweth to others. And whereas they partake of a small quantity of your outward good things, you shall have the same in kind here returned seven-fold into your Bosoms, and at last shall be received into the Kingdom of Heaven, prepared for all those who

have fed the hungry, cloathed the naked, and performed such like works of Charity to the poor Members of Christ, *Mat. 25. 35.* So that you pleasure not the Poor, so much by *giving*, as you profit your selves by *receiving*.

Riches are a meer uncertainty, like unto a flock of Birds in a Mans Field, who cannot say they are his, because they sit there, *for they take unto themselves wings and fly away.* Now in dealing with things uncertain, it will be your wisdom,

1. To make them as sure as you can.
2. To make the best use of them that you can.

1. What greater wisdom than to make sure? And what better way imaginable to make sure your Estate, than by putting it into good hands? And what safer hands than the hands of the Lord? Put them into the hands of God's Poor, and you thereby put them into God's hands.

As in a State Politick, the *Lieger Ambassadors* that are sent abroad to lie in Foreign Kingdoms, to secure our peaceable State at home. So what we disperse and send abroad to the Poor, secureth the rest at home. For as the Poor beg of thee, so they beg of God for thee, that he would preserve and bless thy store: Their Devotions are sent up to Heaven for thy Security.

2. And what better use can you make of your riches, than by bestowing a part of them upon the Poor and Nedy? It being the chief end of giving more of this Worlds Goods to some than to others, that they who have the greater store should give out thereof to them who are in want. — Which was typically signified by the *Israelites* gathering of *Manna*, which though it were rained down from Heaven, yet the Lord would not allow, that they who had gathered more than was needful for themselves and their Household, should hoard up their Superfluity, but enjoyned them to communicate of their abundance to such as had not enough, that so he that had the

most, should have nothing over; and he that had the least, should have no lack. The which the Apostle applyeth to the giving of Alms out of our abundance to those who want, 2 Cor. 8. 14.

By communicating of our riches to the Poor, we shall make them *our Friends*, both to give evidence for us of the truth of our *Faith* and *Charity*, and to beg a plentiful return upon us: This is the advice of our Saviour, *Luke 16. 9. Make to your selves Friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.* Where, by *Mammon*, our Saviour intendeth the abundance of this worlds goods, which he called *Mammon of unrighteousness*, because ordinarily by worldly men it is unrighteously gotten, unrighteously reserved, and unrighteously used. This he hinteth, that his Disciples might be the more wary about it, and the more careful of *making themselves Friends thereof*, that is, so to use their Riches by relieving the Poor, as the good Works done by them may give Testimony of their *Faith* and *Charity*, which is the part of Friends. Friends are ready to give good Testimony of one another. The Coats and Garments, which *Dorcas* made for poor Widows, *Acts 9. 39.* were such Friends. But mark what follows, make to your selves Friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, *that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. When ye fail, that is, when ye depart out of this World, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.* This Particle *THER*, some refer to being relieved, call upon God to recompense their Benefactors, but most refer it to the *Riches* which they bestow upon the Poor, which, by vertue of the evidence that they give of the *Faith* and *Charity* of the Giver, are said to receive them into everlasting habitations.

Surely, rich men have a price in their hand, wherewith to purchase to themselves a good Inheritance

ritance, had they but hearts to make use of it. Though Charity pretend not to any merit *ex congruo*, or *condigno*, yet will it be plentifully recompensed by God both here and hereafter.

I hope you will pardon my zeal in pressing this Duty of *Charity* so much upon you; I do assure you, it is not out of any design to take any thing from your selves and Children, but only to shew you *the Surest and Safest way of Thriving in the World*; and how you may entail God's blessing upon your Children, and so secure unto them the Portion which you leave them. I am willing to do you a kindness, and I shall do you a great kindness, if I can but effectually perswade you to this duty: Whatever kindness I may herein do to those who need, I shall do a greater kindness to you that will be perswaded to help them in their need; in as much as it is a more blessed thing to give, than to receive. And therefore bear with me, if I do not only offer you a kindness, but use such importunity to press you to accept it.

The *Apostle*, knowing how backward rich Men especially were to all Works of Charity adviseth, *Timothy* (1 Tim. 6. 17.) not only to commend unto them the duty, but to command it. The Expression of the *Apostle* is very observable, He doth not say ἀγγέλλε declare unto them, but παρ' ἀγγέλλε charge them that are rich in this World, as they love their lives, and would save their Souls. To be rich in good Works. As one wittily glosseth upon those words of the *Apostle*. 'If God should charge the Rocks, they would send forth Water: If the Stones, they would become Bread: If the Ravens they would feed *Elijah*: If the Quails they would victual the Camp: If the Clouds, they would rain down Food from Heaven upon his poor People: will you then be more rocky than Rocks? More stony than Stones? More ravenous than Ravens?

‘ More senseless than Birds? More empty than
‘ Clouds.

If you be rich in this **Worlds Goods**, and be not rich in Good Works, talk not of your *Faith*, for there can be no true Faith with Good Works, *Jam. 2. 17.* Neither tell me of your Religion: For there can be no true Religion in you, so long as you make no Conscience of this Duty. *Pure Religion*, saith the Apostle *James, chap. 1. 27. (is this) To visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Afflictions*, and you never learned other Religion of us.

The Lord indeed giveth us leave to eat and to drink, and to chear up our hearts by partaking, in some measure, of that Portion he hath bestowed on us; but he never allowed us to keep all unto our selves, or to spend it in the gratifying of our sinful Lusts, but commands us to set apart some Portion of our Estate for the relief of those for whom nothing is provided; *Prov. 3. 9.* Saith the Wise-man, *Honour the Lord with thy Substance.* He doth not say, *Honour thy self with thy Riches*, but *Honour the Lord with them*; as they come from his Grace, so they should be used to his Glory. Now then we use our Riches to God’s Glory, when in obedience to his Command, we therewith supply the want of his Children, who will thereby be stirred up to bless and praise the Name of God for his Fatherly care and providence over them.

Shall I yet again need to tell thee, that thy liberality to the Poor cannot bring any loss to thine Estate, seeing, The more thou givest, the more thou shalt receive? It is fabled of *Midas*, that *whatsoever he touched was turned into Gold.* But it is no Fable, nor Fancy, That the hand of Charity can do it, can extract Grace out of your Goods, Righteousness out of Riches, and Heaven out of Earth. The imparting of Goods to such good uses, whilst it seems to impair, doth mightily improve what you have, to
your

Your most singular advantage. The more liberal any Man is, the more likely he is to be a rich Man: The mercy of God will crown his Beneficence with such a blessing of Store, that he shall find. He will never be behind hand with him. It's nothing which the Poor receive from him, in comparison of that Blessing which he shall receive from the Lord. It may be, thou dost not find thy Store thereupon presently increased, yet if thou diligently observe the Passages of God's Providence towards thee, thou wilt sooner or latter find thyself abundantly re-imburshed of all thy Disbursements.

I told you before that I am willing to do you a kindness, and that it may be a kindness indeed, I must farther tell you, not only what you should do, but *How you must do it, that you may not loose your reward.* And if you would make sure to be Gainers by whatever you thus lay out, observe the following *DIRECTIONS.*

I. Give your selves to the Lord, and with your selves, all that ever you have, to be so laid out, whether upon your selves or others, as he doth appoint and require.

2 Cor. 8. 2. The Apostle boasting of the Macedonian Christians, and of the riches of their Liberality, tells us, *ver. 5. That they first gave themselves to the Lord.* He that will not give himself to the Lord, is like to give but little else. And if he should give all that he had, and only withhold himself, God will not accept, nor reward it. God will have nothing of thee, if he may not have thy Heart.

Give your selves for servants to the Lord, to serve him with your Spirits first, and then with all that you have. Make over your selves to God in Christ to be his *Covenant Servants*, and thenceforth count and say of your selves, as the Apostle teacheth you, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *I am not mine*

own, but must henceforth glorifie God with my Body and my Spirit, yea, and with all that I have, which are his.

He knows not what he says, that says *I serve the Lord, who hath not first given himself to him for a Servant*; God will not be served by Aliens. And he hath but lyed unto God, who says, *I give my self unto the Lord for a Servant*, and doth not actually serve him with all that he hath. He that hath given himself to the Lord, will with-hold nothing from him that God will have.

He that will serve the Lord with his Spirit, will as readily serve him with all that he hath. God that hath given us his Son, how will he not with him freely give us all things, Rom. I. 32? And that Man that hath given God his Soul, will keep back nothing from him.

Friend, thou say'st thou art the Lords, and hast devoted thy self to him; thou hopest that thou art Christ's and hast joyned thy self in Covenant unto him, resolving to be his Disciple: But, which way runs thine Estate? Whose House is this, these Lands, and this Money which thou hast, are these the Lords too? How is it then that thy Lusts have so much of them at their Service? That thy Pride hath so much, and thine Appetite so much or that they are all impropriated and kept by thee to feed thy Covetousness? Is all thou hast the Lords? How is it then that thou begrutchest, or thinkest so much of every little that he calls for from thee? Thou who wilt not in every case part with so much as God calls for, art either a Lyar, or a Robber. Either thou didst not give all to God, when thou saidst thou didst, and then thou art a Lyar: Or if thou didst give all, and yet will not let him have what he calls for, but bestowest it elsewhere, then thou art a Robber.

Obj. But some will say, must I give all I have to the Poor, and so leave my self and my Family to be Beg-

gars?

gars? Or, what else is your meaning, when you say, I must give all to the Lord?

My meaning is, that you so give all to the Lord, as to resolve to dispose of your whole Estate to such Persons and Purposes, as God orders and appoints you. The Lord would have you live and maintain your self, and provide for your Family soberly, according to your rank and degree (some extraordinary cases being excepted.) But still you must allow no more to your self, nor no less to those in need, than is according to the will and good pleasure of the Lord.

Some other will here put in and say: But I am free and bountiful, and give great Alms; I cast my Bread upon the Waters; I give a Portion to Six, and also to Seven: I devise liberal things; I delight to shew Mercy.

Dost thou so? 'Tis well thou dost, God's blessing on thine heart for it: 'Tis great pitty that any liberal Man in the World should lose his reward; and that thou mayst not lose thine, take this Counsel of a Friend that loves thee. See that thou hast sincerely given up thy self to God as his Covenant-Servant, and art a devoted Disciple of Jesus Christ, and that these thy works of Mercy are done in pursuance of thy Covenant, as a part of that Service which thou owest and hast vowed to thy Lord, whose thou art, and whose Talents thou reckonest all thou hast. And look to this the rather, because it's possible that Men of great good Works may be, as of little Charity, so of little Faith also, which is that Grace which entitles God to us, and all we do, and obtains our acceptance with Him. First, by Faith give thy self to him, and then by Charity serve him with what thou hast, and then doubt not of a plentiful return.

II. Offer up your Gift upon the Altar. Give your selves, and with your selves, all that you have, through Christ, unto God. Let him be your Altar

that sanctifies your Gift: 'Tis through him alone you will be accepted, Eph. 1. 6. He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. Let your Souls be sprinkled with his Blood, and thereby washed from your Sins, from your natural and contracted Guilt and Pollution, and then they will be a Gift acceptable to the Lord. Do not think you have no more to do, but to give your selves as you are to the Lord: You have given your selves to Sin, and now, it may be you think, you will give your selves back to the Lord: But know there is more in it than so. Thou art in thy self a guilty and defiled Soul, and God will have none of thee in this case: Go to Christ first, and get him to cover thine Unrighteousness, and to cleanse thee from thy filthiness, put thy wretched Soul into his Hands, and let him present it unto the Father.

*And whatever thou givest with thy self, **thine Aims, thy Bread, or thy Flesh, or thy Money,** that thou hast for his Poor; put it all into the same Hand, and let him present this also to the Father for the use of his Servants.*

Friends, though I would have you Givers, yet I would not have you Losers. I would not have you Losers, either by Saving, or by unprofitable Giving.

1. Be not Losers by Saving, That's the next way to lose all, by thinking to save, and keep all to your selves. He that will save his Life, that is, by not laying it down when God calls for it, he shall lose it. And so he that will save his Estate that is, by refusing to lay it out where God would have him, he is the more like to loose all that he hath.

2. Lose not by unprofitable Bestowing. All that is bestowed unprofitably, as to thee, to whomsoever thou givest it, which is not given first through Christ unto God, and to his Servants for the Lord's sake. It may be profit however to them, who receive it, but no profit to thee who givest. 'Tis only

ly what's given to God, and to Men for God's sake, for which God becomes Debror.

III. Fetch all your Alms out of your Hearts. Draw forth thy Soul to the Hungry, Isa. 58. 10. Give what thou givest. 1. Out of a willing Heart. 2. Out of a compassionate Heart. 3. Out of a thankful Heart.

1. Out of a willing Heart; Give willingly, 2 Cor. 9. 6. Every Man as he proposeth in his Heart so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful Giver. An Alms-deed in Scripture is called a Sacrifice, such a Sacrifice as is well pleasing unto God, Heb. 13. 16. To do good, and to communicate forget not, for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased. Now all our Christian Sacrifices are to be Free-will Oblations. An Alms without a Will, is a Sacrifice without an Heart, and will be rejected of God.

2. Out of a compassionate Heart. Get a compassionate Heart, and fetch all thine Alms out of thine own Bowels. 'Tis the hard Hearts of Men that shut up their Purses: Thou say'st that thou hast not to spare, thou wantest it thy self, or those about thee may want it: No, thou wantest an Heart, and that is the reason that those that need must want thine Alms. A Compassionate Heart would find something or other, for those that are in distress.

Get a Compassionate Heart. God is a God of Compassion, and his Children are Compassionate Children. Col. 2. 12. Put on (as the Elect of God) Bowels of Mercy, 1 Job. 3. 17. Whoso hath this Worlds Goods, and seeth his Brother in need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him (or is a Man of no Bowels) how dwelleth the love of God in him? What ever thy Profession or thy Religion be, or thy hopes be concerning it, thou hast nothing of God in thee, thou art none of His, who hath no Bowels. God is a God of Mercy, His Children are all merciful Children.

Worldling, wilt thou prove thy self to be *no Child of God*? Would'st thou prove that the *Faith* thou hast is *vain*, thy *Religion vain*, and that thou art but a *Pretender to the love of God*, and hast not the love of God within thee? This unmercifulness of thine will put it out of question. If thou hast no Bowels of Compassion, the love of God is not in thee.

O get a compassionate and merciful Heart. Hast thou received Mercy, and wilt thou not be merciful? Dost thou hope for Mercy, and wilt thou not shew Mercy? Put thy self into thy poor Brothers case a while, think how hard 'tis with him, think of *his hunger and nakedness*, of *his pressing Straits and Miseries*, let thy Soul go into his House and see *his naked Walls*, *his cold Chimney*, *his empty Cupboard*, *his starving Children*, and then think again. O how if it were thus with me! Ah poor distressed Creatures: How are they *pinch'd and pin'd* whilst I have enough and abound? O my *Bowels* how can you but yern? O mine *heart*, how can'st thou but bleed over such distressed ones? Hast thou nothing to help them? There's enough in my House, there's enough in my Purse to yield them Relief, but is there no Alms for them in my Heart? Can I have the Heart to see them pine and perish, and do nothing to help them? Where are ye, O my Bowels? where are my Compassions? O my Soul help, and send Portions to them for whom nothing is provided.

3. *Out of a thankful Heart.* Remember what God hath done for thee: Hast thou any sense or experience of his special Love to thee, in Christ? What should that produce? The sense of divine Goodness in a way of *Common Providence* calls for all due acknowledgement from us: But a taste of his paternal love in pardoning our Sins, and justifying our Persons, and enstating us in eternal Life and Happiness, upon the account of his Son's suffering, and dy-

ing

ing for us, this is, as the strongest *Motive* to, so the most *commanding reason* of our Charity, or Beneficence to our Fellow-creatures, who stand in need of it.

In Christ the Beams of God's Mercy are concentrated, as the Beams of the Sun are in a Burning-glass, which falling upon our Hearts, they are, or should be hereby inflamed, and made to burn with greater heat of Love and kindness to all in want, especially to all who bear his image. *The right Spring of Mercy to our Neighbour, is the sense of God's Mercy towards us.*

IV. *Let all your Streams of Love flow into the Ocean.* My meaning is, *Let all be done to the glory of God.* This must be your last end to which all must be directed, as the Apostle charges, *1 Cor. 10. 31. Whether you eat or drink, I may add, or whether you give to eat, or to drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* Let this be chiefly in your Eye and your heart, *that God may be glorified.* Other subordinate ends there are, *As refreshing of the Needy, the adorning our holy Profession, the Edification of others by our good Example,* but all at last must end here, *that God may be glorified.*

Take heed your end be not to glorify yourselves. As *Worms* breed in the fairest Fruit; so *Pride and Vain Glory* are apt to creep up out of the best Duties.

V. *Let your works of Charity be done in Humility,* giving unto God the honour of them, by acknowledging that as *what you have bestowed on the Poor, you first received from him:* So it was his goodness to give you an heart to give any thing out of your abundance towards their Relief. Yea, you ought to be very jealous over your selves, lest there hath been some *hypocrisie, and self seeking* in your works of Charity; acknowledging that you are so far from meriting

Heaven

Heaven and Salvation by your good works, that, if God should deal with you according to the rigour of his Justice, he might cast you into Hell, for that *Pride* and *Hypocrisie* which cleaves to your best works.

VI. Let your works of Charity to Men be accompanied with Prayers and Thanksgivings unto God. Thank God, that he hath put you amongst the *Givers*, and not amongst the *Receivers*, it being a more blessed thing to give than to receive: That he hath put you among the *Givers*, and not the *Withholders*: That he hath given you an *Estate* to give, and an *Heart* to give. Thank God, that he will accept a Gift at your Hands; that He, whose is all you have, and to whom it is owing, will count that a Gift, which is but the payment of so small a part of your Debt: Say with *David*, in 1 Chron. 29. 11, 13. *Thine, O Lord, is the greatness: Both riches and honour come from thee; Now therefore, Our God, we thank thee, and praise thy Glorious Name. But what am I, and what is my People, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.*

VII. Give out proportionably to what God hath given unto you, 1 Cor. 16. 2. The Apostle adviseth the *Corinthians* to give, as God hath prospered them.

Rich Men therefore ought to be rich in good works, for God expecteth fruit answerable to the Seed which he soweth. Hath he abounded to you in this Worlds Goods? You ought thereupon to be abundant in Good Works towards others. Your Pounds are expected, where the Widows Mites are accepted.

Having given you some Directions for the manner of bestowing your Alms, I shall briefly shew you the means how to attain to this Grace of *Christian Charity*.

Now

Now the means I shall prescribe, shall be.

1. Such as tend to the bringing your hearts to be willing to this Duty.

2. Such as shall tend to the helping of you for the better managing of it.

First, for means to bring your hearts to be willing to set upon this duty, take These,

1. Oft call to mind and imprint in your memories the manifold Precepts in the Scriptures, requiring this Duty at your hands. As also the many gracious Promises God hath there made for the encouragement of his People thereunto; and thereupon reason thus with thy self, *what?* Had God commanded me (Deut. 15. 10.) to give unto my Brother according to his necessity? To cast my Bread upon the Waters? Eccl. 11. 1. And hath our blessed Saviour commanded me, Luke 6. 38. to give unto the Poor?

And hath the Lord for my encouragement thereunto promised, that he will bless me in all my Works, and in all that I put my hand unto, prosper me in my Trade and Calling? That my Barns shall be filled with Pleny? That what we shall give or lend unto the poor, he will pay us again with Interest? That though I cast my Bread upon the Waters where it may seem to be lost, yet I shall find it after many days, it shall certainly be returned into my bosom with encrease? And hath my Saviour for my encouragement promised, Luke 6. 36. That if I give unto the poor, it shall be given to me again, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, running over? Then certainly, there is no such compendious way to thrive and prosper in the World as by my Liberality to the Poor.

2. Prefer Heaven and the things thereof before this Earth, and earthly things. Though the Temporal Reward which I have so much insisted on, be a great encouragement, yet the greatest encouragement is the Spiritual and Eternal Reward that the Lord hath promised. And that this may be the more prevailing encouragement, learn to esteem and prize things

Spiritual

Spiritual and Eternal above all things that are but Temporal. Suppose it should so fall out, that you should never receive *in kind* what you bestow, yet count those *temporal* things put off at the best rate, which you receive in things *Spiritual and Eternal.* Value *Grace and Glory* above all the *Treasures of the Earth,* and count your selves to grow rich Men according to your abounding in *Grace,* and your *Evidences for Glory.* And esteem it an unthrifty Saving and holding in, where you have an opportunity to improve in *your inner Man* by expending of *your outward Substance.*

Till Heaven be valued above Earth, this great Argument encouraging to Acts of Bounty and Mercy will lose its Efficacy. When God says, *Cast thy bread upon the waters for thou shalt find it again after many days,* the Worldling will be ready to demand. But how shall I find it? In what way shall it be returned me? Shall I have *Bread for Bread,* or *Money for my Bread,* or *Houses or Lands for my Money?* Probably thou may'st. But suppose not so, yet it shall be better than so, thou shalt have *in Grace* what thou partest with in *Bread or Money.* Thou shalt reap *in Heaven,* what thou sowest *on the Waters.*

I but the Worldling will reply; *I do not mean to part with my Bread or my Money so.* No, I know thou dost not: But the reason is, because thou lovest this Earth more than Heaven. Thou sayest, Will *Grace* feed me? Will *Grace* cloath me? Can I keep my self and my Family? Can we live and be maintained and preserved from Poverty and Beggary here, by hopes of *Glory* hereafter?

Go fool, and learn better what God is, and what his everlasting Mercy is; let the lasting Treasures, the durable Riches be more priz'd and valued by thee; and this will stop thy mouth, and silence thine Heart from such vain Reasonings. Thou wilt never again say, I cannot spare my Bread, or my Money,

Money, when by spending it for God thou see'st thou make'st him thy Debtor, who will pay it thee again in Spiritual and Eternal good things, if once thou account these to be better than thy Bread, or thy Money.

But till thou art come to be settled in this Judgment and Belief, both that the good things of God are infinitely better than the good things of this Earth; and that what thou sowest in the Earth, thou shalt certainly reap in Heaven; till thou comest in good earnest to be of this mind, God's Poor are like to be but little the better for thee.

'Tis this, beloved, that will effectually do it, will open your Hearts, and open your Hands in Bounty and Liberality for God, when you come to be rooted in the practical Belief of this *Principle*, upon which the practice of all Religion stands, and is upheld in the World; *That Heaven is better than Earth*: If this other be added to it, that *what is sincerely laid out for God in the Earth, shall certainly be repayed in Heaven*; besides that return which the Lord here in this World oftentimes makes to the charitable.

2. For the Means tending to help you for the better managing of it; take these following.

1. *Either follow the Example of the Primitive Saints, in setting apart something every Lord's Day out of the former Weeks gettings.*

Or, 2. *Devote unto God a certain Portion of the Yearly Incomes for Charitable Uses.*

That the former way of setting a part something every Lord's Day for the Relief of the Poor, was the Practice of the Primitive Christians, is clear from that of the Apostle to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. *Now concerning the Collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first Day of the Week (which is the Lord's Day) let every one of you lay by him*

him in store, as God hath prospered him. This way and course concerns such in special who live upon their daily Labours.

But to such Gentlemen, and others, who live upon their Rents and Offices, and to such Merchants and Citizens who once a Year cast up their Accounts, I would commend the latter way of devoting unto God a certain Portion of their Yearly Income by Rent or otherwise, and then separating it from the rest, to account it *a Sacred stock* for the Poor, not to be employed to any other use.

All Men naturally (through the Corruption that is in them) are hard hearted, and close-handed, very unwilling to part with any thing considerable upon sudden occasions for charitable Uses. But having aforehand set a part something, their Ears, Hearts and Hands, are open to every charitable Motion, and very ready and forward are they the more liberally to contribute thereunto of what is laid by; rejoycing that they have met with so good an Object of Charity.

As for the *quota pars*, what proportion every one ought to set a part out of his Yearly Income for good Uses. I do not find it particularly set down in the word of God, and therefore dare not positively determine the same: And the rather, because there are so many Circumstances which alter the Case, that no certain Rule can be given, but shall leave it to the Discretion and Ingenuity of the prudent Christian.

But though the Scripture doth not determine the exact Proportion to be set apart for good Works, yet doth it command us, *to give out proportionably to what God hath given unto us; to open our hands wide to the Necessaries of the Poor; to be rich in good Works, and the like.* Yea the Scripture doth commend unto us the Examples of very bountiful Christians, as of *Dorcas*, who is said to be *full of good Works, and Alms-deeds which she did*, Acts 9. 36. And of *Cornelius*,

nelius, who is said to give much alms. Acts 10. 2. And of the *Macedonians*, who are said, to give to their Power, yea and beyond their Power, 2 Cor. 8. 3. It likewise commendeth unto us the Example of *Jacob*, who in Testimony of his Thankfulness unto God for what he should bestow upon him, vowed the tenth thereof unto God, for pious and charitable Uses, as *Gen.* 28. 20, 22. And *Jacob* vowed a vow unto God, saying, of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

These Examples are left upon record for our imitation; for as the Apostle speaketh, *Rom.* 15. 4. *Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our Learning, and for our Admonition.* The most that I have heard or read of, who have taken this Course, to consecrate unto God a certain portion of their Estate to charitable uses, have followed the Example of *Jacob*, in giving a tenth part unto God. And as God did exceedingly bless *Jacob* after his Vow; so hath he likewise blessed very many others, after the like Vow unto God.

Mr. Stock in his Funeral Sermon at the Burial of the *Lord Harington*, speaking of his Charity, declared that in his life time, he gave the tenth part of his yearly Revenue to the Poor. *Mr. Gataker* in his Funeral Sermon at the Burial of *Mr. John Parker* Merchant, and Citizen of *London*, speaking of his Charity, saith, That at his first effectual Call, among other things he then resolved upon, this was one, to set apart every year a tenth of his Gain for the Relief of the Poor and Needy; and that God from that time abundantly advanced his Estate. And questionless, if such Merchants, who usually ensure their Goods upon their apprehension of danger at Sea, would sincerely promise unto God, in Testimony of their Thankfulness unto him, the tenth of what should come safe into their Hands, they might receive far greater Returns than they do.

In

In the Life of Dr. Hammond, written by Dr. Fell, I find this Expression, ' *The Rate and Sum of what the Doctor devoted, was the Tenth of all his Income, wherein he was so strictly punctual, that commonly the first thing he did was to compute, and separate the poor Man's Share.* And how his Stock increased notwithstanding his abundant giving out to the Relief of others, the History at large declareth. The like I read in the Life of Mr. William Wheatly, Minister of Banbury, how for many years he set a part the Tenth of his Yearly comings in, both out of his Temporal and Ecclesiastical Means, and that his Estate prospered the better after he took that Course. To these I could add many more out of the Lives of good and charitable Men, and out of several Funeral Sermons, which are Printed and Published. And could name multitudes of Men now living, who have devoted the like, and greater Portion out of their Estates for Charitable Uses, and are ready to attest the Truth of this Discourse, *That they are no losers, but great gainers in Temporals by what they have given to the Poor.*

Mr. Richard Baxter in his Learned and Useful Piece, called, *A Christian Directory*, Part the 4th. Fol. 195. Treating of the *quota pars*, what proportion is meet for most Men to devote for Charitable Uses, whether the tenth part of their Increase be not ordinarily a fit Proportion? Hath this Expression,

' *Though the proportion of the tenth part is too much for some, and much too little for others, yet for the most part I think it as likely a proportion as it is fit for another to prescribe in particular.*

Yet I would not be thought to impose this as a proportion to be observed by all; for all Mens Hearts are not alike enlarged with Love and Bounty; and some there are who have no more than is necessary for the comfortable support of themselves and Family;

mily; from whom less is required for the Relief of others. But I would advise such whom the Lord hath blessed with a plentiful Estate, so that their necessary Expences are, or might be, far less than their Incomes, to devote a *tenth part* of their *whole* Yearly Income to Charitable Uses: I say of their *whole* yearly Income, without first deducting any part thereof for Diet, Cloaths, or other necessary Expences; for the tenth of the remainder will be a very inconsiderable proportion, for a rich Man to devote to Charity, and far short of that which the Scripture seemeth to call for.

And know assuredly, that this course is so far from being a means of diminishing your Stock and Store, that if it be managed as it ought, according to the forementioned Rules and Directions, it is the surest and safest means, the most compendious course of increasing it, through the secret Blessing of God, which accompanieth the same; which hath been sufficiently demonstrated in the foregoing Discourse.

2. *Be careful on whom thou bestowest thine Alms;* for by giving to such common Beggars, who are able to work, and yet are so lazy, that they will not work, but would live by the Sweat of other Mens Brows; I say, by relieving such, we shall both maintain them in their idle and wicked Life; and they who are truly poor, and ought to be looked upon as the proper Objects of our Charity, will be neglected, or at least scantied of that, which of right belongeth to them.

I am not against the relieving of all Beggars; some of them I know are blind, others lame, aged and past their work; these *impotent* Poor, in regard of their present Condition, are Objects of Charity, but not the *impudent* Poor, who have strength enough to work, and will not, those *canting Vagrants*, who are the burthen of the earth, and shame of the Kingdom, for these I have no Charity: Neither
had

had the Apostle St. Paul, who towards God's Poor was full of Compassion; but for the Devil's Poor, he gave this command, *2 Thes. 3. 10. That if any would not work, neither should he eat*; that hunger and necessity might drive them to labour. Erasmus mentions a kind of Mercy meetest for such, 'tis *misericordia puniens*: Surely the Whip is more their due, than Food: Bridewell to entertain them than an Alms house.

III. Another Means for the attaining this Grace of Christian Charity, is this, *Be earnest with God in Prayer, that he would be pleased to bestow upon thee that adorning and enriching Grace of Charity, and accept thy offering*. This Sacrifice, as it must be offered up to Heaven; so it must be fetched from Heaven. The gift of a merciful and charitable Heart, is one of those Gifts that come down from above, even the Father of Lights, *James 1. 17*. If thou receivest not this Gift from God, thy poor Brother is like to have no gift from thee. Now it must be thy Prayer that must fetch down this Gift from God. Lift up thy Heart to the Lord, and beg a merciful and compassionate Soul; beg of God that he would make thee ready to every good Work, willing to communicate to the poor Members of Christ, according to thine ability, and their Necessity, that thereby thou mayest lay up in store for thy self a good Foundation against the time to come, and so lay hold on Eternal Life: Pray for a willing Heart, and pray for acceptance of thy Gift, that thine Alms may be such a Sacrifice, and so offered up, that therewith the Lord may be well pleased.

Having thus shewed you the Means on our part to be performed for attaining and exercising this Grace of Charity: I shall close this Discourse with answering two or three Objections.

Object. 1. Some object the greatness of their Charge, the number of their Children, who must be cared for, and thereupon have little to give to the Poor.

Ans.

Ans. 1. *Hast thou many Children, thou oughtest the rather to be Charitable, that thereby thou mayest entail God's Blessing upon them, which is the best Portion, and surest Inheritance thou canst leave them; that will secure their Stock, and improve their Store; whereas Unmercifulness to the Poor will entail a Curse instead of a Blessing upon the Persons and Estates of thy Children.*

2. *Thou who objectest the number of thy Children as a Peal for thy Parsimony, how justly may God then lessen the number, and so take away this Excuse, by taking thy Children from thee.*

3. *Suppose thou hast many Children, it may be half a score, reckon God for one more; give unto him a Childs Portion; I mean, bestow upon the Poor, for his sake as much every Year as one Child stands thee in; give unto them a Childs Portion, and I dare boldly say thou wilt not be the poorer, but rather a great gainer. For thereby wilt thou procure God's Blessing upon thy self and Children, which in truth, is all in all; and without which, all is like to come to nothing, as we see by daily experience, which made St. Austin say, *Heredi prastabis, quicquid misericordiae causa de ejus portione detraxeris*, Aug. de Tempore, Serm. 76. That which thou givest out of thine Estate to Charitable Uses, will be no loss to thy Children, but rather a great advantage. Yea the Spirit of God in setting forth the Happiness of a merciful Man, saith, His Children shall fare the better for his Goodness and Bounty, as *Psal. 37. 16. He is ever merciful, and tenderth, and his seed is blessed*; that is, God will bless his Children, not only with Spiritual, but also with Temporal Blessings.*

2. O! Many Professors in these days are very barren in good Works.

Ans. *Fruitless and uncharitable Christians may make a profession of Religion, but questionless they are no sound Christians, nor sincere Professors. For most certain*

tain it is, that *the Elect of God* do put on Bowels of Mercy and Compassion, as the Apostle speaketh, Col. 3. 12. And therefore an *uncharitable Christian* is a meer contradiction. For who is a Christian but he who conforms himself to the Law and Life of Christ? The substance of whose Law is *Charity*, and whose Life was spent in going about doing good, some way or other, to the Souls and Bodies of Men and Women.

Whosoever therefore having this Worlds Goods, seeth his Brother in need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him, and will not communicate any thing considerable towards his Necessities; let his Profession be never so specious and glorious in the Eyes of Men, yet certainly he is but a rotten Professor, and dissembling Hypocrite in the sight of God. In *Matth. 25. 23.* We find that Liberality to the Members of Christ is made the special Touchstone of true Faith and Godliness. For they are the Charitable Persons, who at the great Day of Judgment will appear to be the *Sheep* at Christ's right Hand, and shall hear that joyful Sentence of Absolution? *Come ye blessed of my father. Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: I was naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.*

And on the other side, all unmerciful Men, who have not relieved Christ in his Members, whatsoever profession of Religion they have made here in this World; yet at the last day will appear to be the *Goats* set on Christ's left hand, and shall hear that dreadful Sentence of Condemnation, *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in, naked, and ye clothed me not: sick and in Prison, and ye visited me*

not. Hence it appeareth, that as Mercy and Bounty to the Poor Members of Christ, is a conspicuous Evidence of true Faith, and sincere Godliness in a Christian, and signally declare him pious: So Liberality and Unmercifulness to them, is a clear mark of Infidelity and Ungodliness, and signally declare him as an unbeliever; so a wicked and prophane Person. Therefore I should much question the Sincerity of their Faith and Piety, who making a profession of Religion, shew little or no Charity to the poor Members of Christ. For as the Apostle James speaketh, *Chap. 1 Ver. 21. Pure religion and undefiled before God, and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction.* Implying, that Works of Mercy and Charity rightly performed, are clear Evidences of the Truth of our Religion, and of the Sincerity of our profession. And if you look into the Scriptures, you shall scarce read of a Man truly Godly, but you may read also, that he was Merciful and Charitable, forward to every good Work. So much shall suffice for this Point of Doctrine.

A word or two for my Brethrens sake of the *first Doctrine* raised from the foregoing Verse, which is the principal Point there intended by our Saviour, which was this.

17. *That all needful Succour, and Good Entertainement ought to be offered in special to the Ministers of the Gospel.*

Our Saviour in commending Objects to our Charity, in the first place mentioneth, *Prophets*, and the *Righteous ones*, saying, *He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophet's Reward*; and then addeth, *He that receiveth a Righteous Man in the name of a Righteous Man, &c.*

Indeed, so general must be the extent and emanation of our Charity, that it must not exclude any who are in want and distress. For though we may, and ought to put a difference between Men upon whom we bestow our Charity; yet ought we not to

to restrain it from any Men who are in want; but must act *the Grace of Charity* towards them who have not the *Grace of Faith*. Yea we ought to do good unto all, as the *Apostle* exhorteth, *Gal. 6. 13.* But especially unto them who are of the household of *Faith*. And among them chiefly to the *Ministers of Christ*. So as this Object of Charity, *Prophet*, is not here to be taken exclusively, but by way of *Eminency* and *Preferment*: Ministers are before, and above others, with more readiness and cheerfulness to be ministered unto.

The People of *Israel* we read were commanded once and again not to leave nor forsake their *Levites*, especially when they were reduced into any Streights and Exigencies, as *Deut. 12. 19.* and *14. 27.* Then much less should the *Ministers of the Gospel* be left and forsaken by the People of God, when they lye under any want or distress.

The Examples of God's People that have gone before us in the performance of this Duty are many, both in the Old and New Testament. It is recorded to the perpetual Praise and Commendation of *Obadiab*, that he hid the *Prophets of God* by fifty in a Cave from the Cruelty of *Jezabel*, and sustained them with Food, and Ministered all things necessary unto them, *1 Kings 18. 13.* We read likewise how the Widow of *Sareptah* nourished the Prophet *Elijah* in her House for many Days and Years, even so long as the Famine continued, *1 Kings 17. 15, 16.* The kindness of the good *Shunamite* to the Prophet *Elisha*, is largely reprov'd, *2 Kings 4. 8, &c.* It fell on a day that *Elisha* passed to *Shunem*, where was a great Woman, and she constrained him to eat Bread; that is, to refresh himself with Food. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat Bread. Having found good Entertainment, and hearty Wellcome, he did the oftner visit the Family. And she said unto her Husband, Behold now I perceive, that this is an holy Man of God, which passeth

seib by us continually, let us make a little Chamber, I pray thee, on the Wall, and let us set for him there a Bed, and a Table, and a Stool, and a Candlestick. Under these, other necessary Accommodations are comprized. The good Woman desired of her Husband, that a Chamber might be made for the Prophet on the Wall; perhaps not that she wanted room in her House to lodge him in, but because she considered, that the noise of a great Family might be some disturbance to the Prophet's Study and Devotion; therefore thought it convenient to provide such a Chamber for him, where he might be more retired, and have the free ingress and egress; that by those Accommodations he might be encouraged the oftner to take up his Lodging there.

Rom. 6. 2. It is set down as the hight and crown of Phebe's good Works, that she had been a succourer of the Apostle Paul, in his wants and straits. And in 2 Tim. 1. 16. We read how Onesiphorus refreshed and relieved the Apostle in his suffering Condition, and was not ashamed of his Chain; that is, though he were a Prisoner, and under restraint for the Gospels sake, yet Onesiphorus owned him, shewed him all respect, succoured and relieved him in that his low Condition. Gaius likewise, a Godly Wealthy Citizen of Corinth, is famous for that kind Entertainment and Succour which he gave to the Apostle; and the Church with him, Rom. 16. 23.

It is recorded to the Commendation of King Edward the sixth, that he afforded all needful Succour, and good Entertainment to Bucer, Fagius, and other Divines, when they fled into this Kingdom by reason of the Troubles in their own Nation. And See in his Epistle *ad Regem Jacobum*, maketh an honourable mention of a liberal Collection of the Church of Scotland sent to the French Ministers, who were banished Religionis causa.

Here are fair Copies for us to write after. And indeed why are these things written, and left upon Record to Posterity, but for our Learning? Not so much for our admiration, as for our imitation, that we might follow their Steps, and write after their Copy, which St. Paul testifies of the Macedonians 2 Cor. 9. 2. *How that very many of them were stirred up and provoked to a liberal Contribution to the poor Saints at Jerusalem by the forwardness and zeal of the Corinthians.* And St. Austin (*Confes. lib. 9. cap. 2.*) confesseth, that the Examples of God's Servants, did burn and consume his own luke warmness, and their fervent Zeal set an edge on his Devotion.

To these Examples I shall add a few REASONS for the better enforcing this Duty upon you.

Real. I. *Because Ministers being supported, are to be most serviceable to the Church of God.* They are Spiritual Fathers, to beget Men unto Christ. They are his Ambassadors, and stand in his stead to reveal the Mysteries of the Kingdom, sent forth to be Reconcilers betwixt God and this sinful World to pray and beseech them to be reconciled unto God, 2 Cor. 5. 20. Their Work is to bear the Name of God, to publish the Salvation of God before the World; to open the eyes of the blind; and to turn them from darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of Sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified: In which respect Ministers of the Gospel are more useful and serviceable in their Generation, than either Lawyers, Physicians or Tradesmen, which yet are useful enough.

1. Lawyers indeed may be a means of settling your Right in your Goods and Lands: But Ministers of settling your Right to your heavenly Inheritance.

2. *Physicians* may cure the *Maladies* of your *Bodies*: But *Ministers* are sent to cure the *Diseases* of your *Souls*.

3. *Merchants* and all sorts of *Tradesmen* may replenish a *Land* with all manner of *Commodities* necessary for this *Life*: But *Ministers* only bring in such *Heavenly* and *Spiritual* *Treasures* as spring up into the everlasting *Treasure*.

So that by supplying their bodily wants, you do comfort and refresh the *Souls* of many. And what better *Charity* imaginable, than by relieving the temporal *Wants* of some few, to further the everlasting *Salvation* of many? Oh what cause will their *Souls* have to bless *God* to all *Eternity* for your *Charity*, who have been converted by the *Ministry* of those whom you have refreshed and supported in their *Work*?

Reas. II. Another Reason may be taken from the consideration of the quality of the Persons for whom I am pleading: They are not so mean as outwardly they appear. They whom you behold so poorly clad, walking so dejectedly being destitute of many outward *Comforts*, are *Men* endowed with many and singular *Prerogatives* and *Priviledges*, not only above the rest of *God's People*; but likewise above the most glorious *Angels*.

Compare them first with the *People of God*; they are called the *Lord's Sheep*; These the *Shepherds of the Flock*, Ezek. 34. 2. Thy *Children* in *God's Family*; These *Spiritual Fathers*, who by the *Seed of the Word* beget *Men* unto *God*, 1 Cor. 4. 15. Therefore the *Spirit of God* vouchsafeth them this *Dignity*, to be called *συνεργῆται Θεῷ*, fellow labourers with *God*.

Concerning *Angels*; true it is that they and *Ministers* are fellow *Servants*, Rev. 22. 9. But ye *Ministers* have sundry *Prerogatives* above them.

1. *Angels* rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, Luke

15. 10. But by the Ministry of Prophets sinners are converted unto God, *Acts* 26. 18.

2. An Angel was sent to *Cornelius*, to advise him whither to go to be instructed: But a Minister instructed him in the way of Life, *Acts* 10. 6, 34.

3. Was the Word of Reconciliation ever committed to *Angels*? To Ministers it is committed, 2 *Cor* 5. 18. It is observable that the Embassage of Ministers is not simply *αγγελια* Message, but *εὐαγγελισμος* the Gospel, the glad some Tydings of Salvation by Jesus Christ, into which the *Angels* themselves do desire to look and pry, as the Apostle *Peter* expreleth 1 *Pet*. 1. 12. The Lord hath also committed to his Ministers the Administration of the Sacraments which are the Seals of his Covenant; whereby all his precious Promises are ratified and confirmed unto us. So that as in respect of the rich Treasures of God's Word committed to their dispensing, they are the *Lord's Treasurers*: So in respect of the Sacraments, they are the *Keepers of his great Seal*. Should these Officers be great under mortal Princes, what are they under the King of Kings?

I have taken the liberty in a few words to set forth some of the Priviledges of the Ministers of the Gospel; partly for the Comfort and Consolation of many of them under the present Misery and Poverty which they suffer, rather than to sin against their Consciences, and partly for the Incitation of others to afford them that double Honour, which the Apostle calls for, 1 *Tim*. 5. 17. Namely, the Honour of Respect, and the Honour of Maintenance, that they suffer them not to sink under their Burthen, but afford them some seasonable succour and relief, suitable their present wants and necessities.

Reas. III. Because Ministers are of finest exposed Sufferings and Distresses, and so have most need of relief. The Bow of the Adversaries of Religion bent most against the Teachers and Leaders of the People

People hath

People. That word, 1 Kings 22. 31. *Fight neither with small or great, save only with the King of Israel;* is often changed into, *Fight neither with small or great, but only against the Prophets of the Lord.* Smite the Shepherds, and the Sheep will be scattered. Experience enough tells the World, who they are that are set in the front of the Battle, and who are the first that fall by the power of the Adversaries. And who should be most in the Eye of Charity; but those that are most in the Eye of Malice?

Besides, for whose sakes is it that Ministers are so often brought so low? Is it not for your sakes, whose Souls are dearer to them than their own Substance? Is it not often upon this account, because they will be faithful to you, and will not keep silence, nor cease to watch over you, and to warn, and to instruct you from day to day?

Might they not save themselves more whole, if they would hold their Peace, and let the Devil alone to have his will of you? For your sakes no doubt it is, that much of their Sufferings come upon them, and shall they be forsaken by you? The truth is, it is upon this account a piece of Justice, as well as a piece of Charity, to relieve and succour them, and so you may do two good works in one; the same Alms may be both a work of Righteousness, and a work of Mercy.

Reas. IV. *Your gratitude to God requireth a cheerful performance of this duty from you.* For wherein can you otherwise make a suitable return to God, for what he hath plentifully conferred on you, than by contributing some of your Temporals to them, from whom you reap so much in Spirituals? The Lord of his free Grace and rich Mercy hath abounded to you in these outward things; *He hath given you richly all things to enjoy.* Yea, as the Psalmist speaketh, *He hath loaded you with his benefits.* Now, not to return some part of your Estate to him, who hath given you all that you do enjoy, were ingrati-

tude in the highest degree: And therefore how doth it concern you often to put the Psalmist's question to yourselves, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards me?* Psal. 116. 12. Surely one kindness deserveth another, as God hath been bountiful to you, sure you are very unworthy, if you be not bountiful to his. And how do you think he will take it at your hands. Will he ever say to you, *Well done good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful, a good Steward of my many Gifts?* Or is it all one to you, whether he say, *Well done, or no?*

And in regard you cannot directly and immediately requite him, who is incapable of being enriched by us; *My goodness extendeth not to thee,* Psal. 16. 2. It will be your wisdom to express your thankfulness to God, by being kind to his poor Relations. Now, who are nearer to God than his Ministers? Whom he hath appointed to stand in his room, to declare his Mind unto his People; who are as the Mouth of the People unto God; so God's Mouth unto the People; who are the Messengers of the Lord of Hosts, by whose Ministry there is Peace concluded, and reconciliation proclaimed between God and Man. Surely what kindness you shew to these, he takes as done unto himself, *Matth. 25. 40.*

Reas. V. Your relieving the faithful Ministers of Christ, may in a sense be said to have something more in it, than if you should shew your Charity to himself; in his own Person, as being a sign of greater Love. It is but an ordinary thing to return kindness to our dearest Friends, but to extend our good will to their Relations or Servants, for their sakes, is an evidence of much greater Love. For if, upon their account only we do good unto these; how much more would it be judged we should be ready to do it unto themselves, if they stood in need of our help? And so will Christ look upon it: Our bounty

bounty expressed to his Ministers he will receive as an evidence of our more abundant love unto him, which he will in no wise forget, nor suffer to go unrewarded.

Reas. VI. *Such as relieve the poor Ministers of Christ, shall have their blessing, the benefit of their Prayers unto God.* They will bless you however, though you have no blessing for them. Though you have not an Alms for them, yet they will have a Prayer for you. But their Bowels being refreshed by you, you may expect that their hearts will be more enlarged for you; and this will be a far greater kindness than you can bestow on them. Your Gift cannot be worth their fervent Prayers. In this respect it is much better to give, than to receive; because he that receives hath but a perishing Alms; he that gives, receives an abiding blessing, the blessing of Prayers.

Herein did the Apostle St. Paul, make a large requital to *Onesiphorus* for the kindness he shewed to him in his imprisonment; as you may read, *2 Tim. 1. 16. The Lord give mercy unto the House of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my Chain.* As if he had said, I received much comfort and refreshment from *Onesiphorus*, when I was in Prison, for the which I beseech the Father of all mercies, to shew mercy unto him and his, by blessing him and his whole Family, with all Blessings, both temporal, spiritual and eternal. And indeed what blessing can that Man want, who hath a share in many Ministers Prayers? Which are available for the obtaining of all good things at the hand of God, as for themselves, so for others. Yea, the very work of Charity doth bespeak a blessing from God. As the Blood of *Abel* is said to cry to the Lord for a curse or vengeance upon *Cain*: So every Act of Charity cryeth to God for a blessing upon the Charitable. Our very acts of Charity in relieving the wants of the Poor, and refreshing their

Bowels, do pray and cry to God for his blessing upon us and ours.

Reas. VI. Your Charity to them will be hereafter rewarded with everlasting glory and happiness in the Kingdom of Heaven. This reason our Saviour himself giveth in these words; He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward; whereby is meant that surpassing and excellent weight of Glory, which cannot be expressed by the Tongue of Men or Angels. Yea, by the reward of a Prophet seemeth to be implied the highest degree of heavenly glory. For Daniel 12. 3. It is said, That they that be wise, that is, the righteous, who are endowed with true spiritual wisdom, being lightened by the Spirit of God, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament; but they that turn many to righteousness, which is the work of Prophets, shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever.

Now by your bounty to the *Prophets of God*, you may come to partake of their reward. So that it is your own concernment to contribute liberally toward their relief. Not that your Charity to them doth merit that glorious reward; but in regard of the promise of God made to all those, who do exercise the same towards his Ministers, it shall be truly given unto them.

For a word of *Application.*

Oh how should the Consideration of these things stir up the heart of all especially such as have a blessing in their hand, and Estate to give, to draw forth their Souls, and reach forth their hands to the supply of these wanting Servants of God. Surely this is a time wherein Christ is trying your love to him, by your Charity to them. Are you not concerned to make proof of your love to Christ? Have you not an opportunity before you, and a loud call from Heaven to prove it in this way? Can you not hear him, that
said

said once to Peter, John 21. 16. *Lovest thou me? Feed my Sheep.* Can you not hear the same voice calling to you, *Lovest thou me? Feed my Shepherds.* Sure thou art very deaf to the voice of the Providence of this day, if thou do not hear this Call. And will you prove that you have no love to Christ? What do you else if you suffer him to starve, when you have wherewith to feed them?

Beloved, it is through God's free grace, and rich bounty, that you enjoy such plenty of outward good things, when many of his Ministers are in great want. What you have, you have received from him. Is it not then most just and reasonable, that you should return back some part of your Estates unto God, by relieving his Ministers, in testimony of your love and thankfulness unto him for what you have? Hath God given you hundreds and thousands? And will not you part with a few Pounds or Shillings when he calls aloud unto you for the same, as now he doth in these days? Though the Earth be his, and the fulness thereof, yet (in a sense) he hath sometimes need of your Estates. *Mat. 25. 35.* Christ telleth you of his wants, and sheweth you how, and when he is relieved.

If you have any spiritual wisdom to discern times and seasons, you may know, that now Christ stands in need of your helping hand, now that so many of his Ministers are in want, for the Testimony of a good Conscience: And should you now deny him in his Ministers, I do verily believe, that if Christ were now upon Earth, as when he first took our nature upon him, and in his own Person should crave your relief, you would turn a deaf Ear unto him.

Though for the present you enjoy manifold blessings; yet how easily can he pluck them out of your Mouths, and if you will not perform your duty, thrust you down from among the Givers, to take your place among the Receivers! Certainly the communicating a part is your best way to secure the

remainder and to season and sanctifie it to your more comfortable use.

Luke 11. 41. Saith our Saviour, *Give Alms of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you*; that is, lawful to be used. The Metaphor is taken from the Law, whereby many things were counted *unclean*, and so unlawful for use; they might not be touched or medled with. Yea, by the inference of the Apostle: *Give Alms of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you*. He seemeth to allude to another Rite of the Law about *First-fruits, Tithes, and Free-offerings*, by giving which to the Lord, all the rest which they had were secured, sanctified and made clean. So that Charitable Men are they, who may with the more freedom, quietness and comfort use what they have. Who that hath any desire to be accepted and approved of God would not have his Person, and the Actions which he doth, and things which he possesseth to be clean? Whatsoever is unclean is odious and abominable in God's sight: Unclean Persons might not approach to God's Sanctuary, nor meddle with sacred matters. If they were not cleansed, they were to be cut off from God's People, *Numb. 19. 20. Levit. 7. 20.* and every unclean thing was an Abomination.

This therefore must needs be a strong persuasive to put in practice the Counsel of our Saviour, in *Giving Alms of such things as we have, that so all things may be clean and sanctified unto us*. What's clean you may use with God's good leave and allowance (clean things may be eaten) and where you have God's good leave, you may expect his blessing. It's sin to eat where God's Portion is among it.

The truth is, it is the great mistake of many, to think that all their Goods are their own, and that they are *Absolute Lords and Owners* of all which they possess: Whereas indeed they are rather *Stewards*,
that

than *Lords and Owners* of this worlds goods; all is the *Lords*. God of his infinite wisdom hath committed to some a greater portion of them, than to others, yet not to be impropriated to themselves, but they must give him his special part, to which his have as good a right as themselves unto the rest, saving only that they may not lay hands on it themselves, until you put it into their hands. But as they may not take it out of yours; so you may not keep it out of their hands. Therefore *Solomon* speaking of the right which the *Poor* have to a part of rich mens estates saith, *Prov. 3. 27. Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it.* So that relieving the *Poor* is not only an act of *Mercy*, left to our choice to do, or leave undone; but also as I said before, an act of *Justice*, to the performance whereof we stand bound. Hence to give *Alms*, and to do *Righteousness and Justice*, are oft in Scripture put the one for the other, both signifying the same thing. Therefore the *Septuagint* have rendred the Hebrew word signifying *Righteousness*, in *Deut. 24. 14.* ἐλεημοσύνη, *Alms-deeds.* And in *Psalms 112. 9.* It is said, *His Righteousness endureth for ever;* that is, his *Alms*, or his *Mercifulness*; as is clear from the foregoing words; *He hath dispersed; he hath given to the Poor; his Righteousness endureth for ever:* Whereby is implied, that giving of *Alms* is one special Branch of that *Righteousness and Justice* we owe to our *Poor Neighbours.*

And dar'st thou yet hold it in thy hand? Wilt thou wrong the *Almighty* of his right, and rob his *Poor* of their due? If it be nothing with thee to be unmerciful, is it nothing neither to be a robber? A robber of God? Will a man rob God? *Mal. 3. 8.* Dares any man be so wicked? How can you expect that he will make a forcible entry upon thee, and take what is his own, and seal a *Writ of Ejectment* against thee,

thee, and turn thee out of all that ever thou hast? Look not to be long in quiet possession of what thou hast; but fear least either God should take thine Estate from thee, or thee from thine Estate, and give thee thy Portion with *Dives*, who because he denyed his *Crumbs* to satisfie poor *Lazarus* his hunger, was himself denyed a drop of cold water to quench his own heat and thirst, *Luke* 16. 23. Upon which words *St. Austin* thus glosseth, *Ideo rogans Dives non exauditur in tormentis, quia roganem pauperem non exaudivit.* Therefore was not *Dives* heard when he prayed in torments, because he hearkened not to the Poor that begged of him, when he was upon Earth, *Aug. Serm. de Diuite.*

Let me add a few quickning words to set home what hath been spoken, by these following Questions.

Quest. 1. Now at length, *What dost thou think of Mercy and Bounty to the Poor?*

1. *Is there not an excellency in it?* Oh how much of God is there in it! *There is faith in it;* He that will cast his Bread upon the Water, is it not a sure sign that he believes God, who hath said, that it shall be returned again, *There's the love of God in it:* He that sees his Brother in need, and shutteth up the Bowels of his Compassions from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? And he that openeth his Bowels, and draws forth his Soul to God's hungry ones, who can deny but the love of God dwelleth in that Man? *It is the Image of God's goodness.* God is a merciful God, and his Mercy is his Glory; and this glory of God shineth forth in his merciful Servants. *There is self denial in it.* Self would keep all; Flesh would hold back; it cannot spare for God; it is a sign that self is laid low, that the Flesh is kept under, that the Interest of God is the swaying Interest, when whatever God will have, this self is not suffered to keep back. Is there

so much of God in mercifulness, and is there not an excellency in it?

2. *Is there not a necessity of it?* Shall the Merciless ever obtain Mercy? Canst thou hope for Mercy who wilt shew no Mercy.

Qu. 2. *What dost thou think of thy self?* Art thou merciful, or merciless? How dost thou find it? Is thine heart open? Are thy Bowels open? Or are they still shut? Dost thou feel that heart of thine inclined and resolved to open thy hands, and to disperse, and that liberally the good things thou hast received, as a good Steward of the manifold gifts of God? Or dost thou yet feel that the Door is shut, thine heart is hard'ned against shewing kindness to the Lord? Give thy plain Judgment, what thinkest thou? Art thou a merciful Man, or merciless? And if merciless, How dost thou hope to obtain Mercy?

Qu. 3. *What dost thou think of thy worldly Goods?*

1. *Are they not thy Talents, committed to thee for thy Lord's Use?* Must thou not be accountable to him, how they have been laid out? Will it be a comfortable account when thou must bring in thy Bill; so much for thy Pride, so much for thine Appetite, or all hoarded up for thy Covetousness, and nothing or but little for God?

2. *Are they more worth than Treasures in Heaven?* Is it more to thine advantage to be rich in this worlds Goods, than to be rich in good Works? Dost thou in good earnest judge, that thy laying up Treasures in Earth is better husbandry, than thy laying up in store for thy self a good Foundation against the time to come?

Qu. 4. *What dost thou think of the state of many of the Servants of God in this Age?* Are there no wanting ones? No distressed ones? what neither amongst Ministers, nor Christians? are they all provided for? do not many of them eat the Bread and drink the Waters of Affliction? Is it not very strait and very

very short with them? Do but enquire after their Condition, and thou wilt find it so. Art thou one of those that carest not how it fares with the poor Friends of Christ? Are they not worth the enquiring and looking after? or at least, is not he worthy, whose they are, and whom they serve? Is not Christ worthy, for whose sake thou should'st shew kindness to his? How will he take thy neglect of them? Remember that word, *Mat. 25. 45. Inasmuch as ye did it not to these ye did it not to me.*

Qu. 5. What wilt thou do for the future? What shall be the success of these few words that are written for thy Learning? What art thou resolved upon? for mercy, or for cruelty? Consult thine own heart; lay not by this little Book, 'till thou art come to a resolution one way or other, either to accept, or reject this Counsel, which in the Name of the Lord is offered thee for thy good. Oh shew thy self a Man in whose Soul Christ hath an Interest, and so great an Interest, that thou wilt do any thing at his word; pity at his word, relieve at his word, give, lend, feed, cloath, refresh the Bowels of his needy ones: Let thy Soul say, Lord at thy word I will do it; here's my Bread, and my Flesh, and my Money, command what thou wilt of it, I will not say thee nay. Thou hast given me a large Portion, and every one of thy Servants that thou appointest to receive it, shall have their part; for thy sake, Lord, they shall have it. Thine I am, and thine is all that I have; shew me thy Pleasure, how much, and how often, and where, and to whom I shall bestow it, and through the Grace of God there it shall go.

Friend, wilt thou say thus? Wilt thou in the presence of the Lord come to this gracious Resolution? Or can'st thou yet find in thine heart to deny thy Lord, and continue to be as hard hearted and close handed as thou wer't wont to be? Dare not to say, Lord, my Goods are mine own, I owe thee nothing: Dread

Dread such Thoughts, that how much soever thou hast, the Servants of Christ shall be nothing the better for it.

Once again consider, thou art put to this choice, either to accept of the Counsel of Christ, or to reject it; which of the two wilt thou do? If thou resolvest not on Mercy and Liberality, thou rejectest the word of the Lord; and if thou rejectest his word, thou rejectest the Lord, and therein sayest, He shall be no Lord for me. But if thou acceptest, then go and do accordingly: Let the Hunger, and the Thirst, and the Nakedness; the wants and distresses of his Servants feel in that relief they shall receive from thee, that thou art a Man to whom the Lord hath not spoken in vain. Let them feel it presently, and let them feel it constantly; this Year, and the next Year, and the next, even whilst they need to receive, and thou hast it by thee to give. This do, and the Lord accept thee; remember all thy Offering, and accept all thy Sacrifices; the Lord hear thee in the day of thy trouble; the name of the God of *Jacob* defend thee: The Lord grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy Counsel: The Lord remember thee with the favour he beareth unto his Children, and visit thee with his Salvation.

A
SERMON
 OF
Good WORKS.

Wherein several Cases of Conscience concerning Alms-giving are resolved.

To the truly Vertuous, and most Worthy of all Honour, Mrs. Parthenia Lowman, Perpetuity of Grace here, and Eternity of Glory hereafter.

Much Honoured,

CONsidering with my self how the love of many, even of the Professors of Religion in these days of ours is waxen cold: Whereas the former times were like *Leah*, blear-ey'd, but fruitful, these like *Rachel*, fair, but barren; abounding in knowledge, but barren in good Works: I thought it not unseasonable to publish a Sermon concerning Charity, which I had Preached at the Morning Exercise in *Cripplegate-Church*, Sept. 1661. And in regard it hath been an ancient Custom, still practised by most Writers, to send forth their Treasures

ties under the Patronage of some eminent Person; which we find warranted by St. Luke, one of the Pen-Men of the Holy Scriptures; I have taken the boldness to Dedicate this ensuing Sermon of Charity to your Patronage for these Reasons.

1. Your ancient and constant respect to me and my Ministry, for thereby you first took notice of me.

2. The many real Demonstrations of that respect I have received from you.

3. Your eminent Liberality to the Poor, not only of your own Parish, but also of several Out-parishes in this City.

Whereas in my Sermon, I have endeavoured to perswade all good Christians, either according to the practice of the Saints in the Primitive times, *to set apart something for the use of the poor every Lords-Day, out of their comings-in the week before*, 1 Cor. 16. 2. according as God hath prospered them: or else *to devote unto God some certain part or portion of their yearly income and revenue for charitable uses*; commending unto the Richer sort the example of *Jacob's vowing a tenth part of his estate unto God*. You have far exceeded that proportion, having, since you were a widow, and had in your own hands the disposing of your estate, given out I dare say (and that upon good ground) better than a fifth part of your receipts to charitable uses. So that I may well apply to you that of the Wise man, *Many Daughters have done virtuously, but you have excelled them all*, Prov. 31. 29. As God hath blessed you with a large estate, so hath he likewise blessed you with an enlarged heart, to give out proportionably to what he hath graciously given unto you. I may truly say, from what my self have heard, that you have often made Heaven resound with many Thanksgivings and Praises unto God for your liberality to the multitude of poor People in several Out-parishes of this City, whose naked Backs are Yearly Cloathed,

Cloathed, and hungry Bellies often filled with your Bounty towards them; whereby you have laid up much Treasure for your self in Heaven; for what you have given to the poor Members of Christ, is treasured up for your self in Heaven, which you shall undoubtedly receive again with great advantage. And truly it is a rare and comely sight to see Riches and Liberality concentrating in one Person; for which your Name shall be had in everlasting Remembrance. As *Mary* her Box of Ointment shall never be forgotten, so neither shall your Liberality to the Poor, whose Bowels have oft been refreshed, and may be for many generations yet to come, by that bountiful Provision, you have laid in for their Succour and Relief. So that the Name of *Mrs. Parthenia Lowman*, doth yield forth a sweet and fresh Perfume throughout many of the Parishes in *London*. Which Bounty and Liberality of yours is the more commendable, in that you do not (as the manner is of too many who are unwilling to part with any thing, till they must needs leave all) defer your works of Charity till your Death, but in your life-time distribute them, and see them settled in a secure way, for the future relief of the Poor. In these respects none seemed so fit to Patronize this Sermon of Charity, as your self, having been so eminent in the Duties and Works thereof. It would have been a great Incongruity, to have had the name of a Rich Miser, prefixed to a Sermon of Liberality.

Though I know you love not to have your good Works, proclaimed before others, yet I have taken the liberty to make a general mention of them, not so much for your Praise and Commendation, but for these special Reasons.

1. *For the Honour of God*, that he might be thereby glorified; for it tends much to his Praise and Glory, when in such Works as himself hath commanded, his Children testify their Obedience and

Thank-

Thankfulness to him: When his Servants by profession are as zealous of good Works, as the Wick-
ed are of Evil Works. And therefore saith our Sa-
viour, *Herein is my Father glorified, if ye bring forth
much fruit*, Joh. 15. 8. Yea, from this very Argu-
ment doth our Saviour perswade us to accompany
our Profession with good Works, saying, *Let your
light so shine before Men; that they may see your good
works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven*,
Matth 5. 16.

2. *For the Credit of our Religion*; For Men are
apt to speak of our Religion and Profession accord-
ing to the Fruits which we bring forth in our Lives
and Conversations, thinking our Religion to be
good, if it be accompanied with good Works. But
contrariwise, if like those of whom the Apostle
speaketh, *We have a form of Godliness, but deny the
power thereof*, 2 Tim 3. 5. Being altogether bar-
ren and unfruitful in good Works, how ready are
they to open their Mouths against all the Professors
of Religion? Whereas, a fruitful Conversation casts
forth a sweet scent, and makes others like our Reli-
gion the better.

3. *For the good of others*, that they may be fir-
red up to an holy emulation by hearing of your ex-
emplary Liberality; as St. Paul testifies of the *Ma-
cedonians*, 2 Cor. 9. 2. that very many of them
were stirred up and provoked to a liberal Contribu-
tion to the poor Saints at *Hierusalem*, by the Cha-
rity of the *Corinthians*.

4. *For stopping the Mouth of our malicious Adver-
saries, the Papists*, who falsely slander Us and our
Doctrine, as if we were Enemies to good Works,
and taught Men that so they believe in Jesus
Christ, it matters not for good Works; where-
as we declare, that every true Christian must
accompany his Profession with good Works, we
constantly call for them, we earnestly urge and
press

press the necessity of them, only we exclude them from the Act of Justification, that so we may give unto Christ the whole praise and glory thereof.

And I dare confidently say, that *Protestants* have been, and still are as abundant and fruitful in Works of Charity, as the *Papists*, whatever they vainly boast to the contrary. A

* *Dr. Willet* learned Divine * of ours, to stop in his Synop- their slanderous Mouths, hath made his *Papismi*. it out by an Introduction of Particulars, that since the breaking forth

of the Light of the Gospel in this Nation, *Protestants* have far exceeded *Papists* in Works of Charity; and how just is it, that your Name be added to that lovely Catalogue?

Now the Lord Jesus, whose Gospel you credit with your Beneficence, bless you with all Blessings, especially with spiritual Blessings, make you more and more fruitful in every good Work, that the many Blessings, promised to the merciful may rest upon you, which he most unfeignedly desireth, who is

Yours to Command,

In any Service of Christ,

Tho. Gouge.

T H E

THE Apostles CHARGE

Concerning

Rich Men,

To be Rich in good Works.

I Tim. 6. 17, 18, 19.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate:

Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal Life.

THE Sum of these words is [*a Direction for Rich Men how to make the best use of their Riches.*] The Ground or Occasion of this Direction is to meet with an Objection, which might be made against the Discommodities and Dangers of Riches, noted before in Verse 9, 10. But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. Ver. 10. For the love of money

money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have err'd from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. From hence some might infer, as the Disciples did from the inseparable and inviolable Bond of Marriage, noted by our Saviour, *Matth. 19. If, say they, the Case of the Man be so with his Wife, it is not good to Marry.* So might some say, if they that will be rich fall into Temptation, and a Snare, &c. Then it is not good to be rich; yea, such as are rich may say, Let us give away, or cast away all that we have, rather than retain such Vipers, as Riches seem to be.

To prevent such inconsequent Inferences, the Apostle giveth this Direction, whereby he sheweth that Riches may be well used, and being well used be a means of helping on our Eternal Salvation. Learn hence not to condemn things good in themselves, because of the abuse of them. The Lord in regard of the ordinary abuse of Riches, stileth them *Mammon of Unrighteousness*, and yet advileth not thereupon to cast them away, but to make to our selves friends hereof, *Luke 16. 9.* That is, so to use them, as the good Work done by them, may as Friends before the Judge give evidence of the Truth of our Faith and Love, and shew that we are of the Sheep of Christ, for whom Eternal Life is purchased.

Having thus shewed the occasion and dependance of those words upon the former, come we now to the Logical Resolution of them; where we may observe two parts.

1. A Prohibition. 2. An Injunction.

A Prohibition of hurtful Vices.

An Injunction of needful Vertues.

The Vices are two { 1. High-mindedness.
2. Vain confidence.

Charge them that are rich in this World, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches. The Vertues are likewise two,

1. Confidence

1. *Confidence or Faith in God, but trust in God,* which is urged by an Argument taken from God's Bounty, in these words, *who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.*

2. *Charity towards Men,* expressed in several Phrases, viz. *By doing good, and by being rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;* which Duties are enforced by an Argument taken from the benefit of performing them, which is in brief, assurance of Eternal Life, implied in these words, *Laying up in store for themselves good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life.*

I shall briefly speak something to the several branches of the Text, as they lie in order, and then come to the question or Case of Conscience, given unto me to handle.

Charge them that are rich in this World; The Expression of our Apostle is here observable; in that he saith not λέγε, speak to them, nor ἀγγέλλε, declare to them, but † παραγγέλλε charge, command them. Well did the Apostle know how forward on the one side rich Men are to be high-minded, and to trust in their Riches; and on the other side, how backward they are to trust in God, and to shew Charity to the Poor; and thereupon saw it requisite, that a Minister should take courage to himself, and not think it enough, closely to intimate to rich Men what Vices they are addicted to, or what Virtues they are bound unto, but remembering the place wherein they stand, which is God's in the Name of his most excellent Majesty, to require, charge and command them to forbear the one, and endeavour after the other.

In the next place, follows the Parties to whom this Charge is to be given, namely, to the rich in this World. *Charge them,* saith the Apostle, *who are rich*

rich in this World, that is, in this present World; noting our Riches to be only for this World; for true is that Proverb of the wise Man, *Riches are not for ever*, Prov. 27. 24. They cannot be carried out of this World. *As naked we came into this world, so naked shall we go out of it*, Job. 1. 21. And therefore it must needs be a point of great Wisdom by that which is but for this present World, to store up a sure foundation for the time to come.

In the next place follow the Vices here forbidden, the first is *Highb mindedness*, whereunto rich Men are very prone, in that their Wealth is as Wind; and though Wind be but a Vapor, yet it puffeth up exceedingly, as we see in a Blader blown up with Wind. In like manner, Riches, though they be but *meer vanity*, Eccl. 1. 2. As the wise Man expresseth it, yet are they apt to puff up Men extreamly, even to think of themselves above what is meet. Whereas, if rich Men would but weigh, that they came from, and must return to the same mold that others do; *for dust they are, and to dust they must return*, Gen. 3. 19. Yea, if they would consider, that they came from the same cursed stock that others do, and are by Nature no better than the meanest; especially if they would consider, that outward Riches cannot add the least dram of real worth to the owners of them; but though they may be the more honourable Parts or Members of the Civil Body of State, yet in the mystical Body of Christ they may be less honourable than the Poor; I say, if rich Men did but seriously consider these things, they would not be so high-minded as they are.

The other Vice here forbidden unto Rich Men, is *Vain Confidence*, or *trusting in their Riches*; and this is very fitly joined to the former; for where our Pride is, there will be our Confidence. That rich Men are apt to put too much trust and confidence in their Riches, doth appear by the titles, which they commonly give unto them, calling them

them *their Goods*, as if they were the only good things; and *their Substance*, as if all things else were shadows; and by the increase of them, they say they are made for ever, and by the loss of them, they say they are utterly undone. What do these Expressions imply, but a Trust and Confidence in their Riches; whereupon saith the wise Man, *The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own Conceit*, Prov. 18. 1. It makes him think himself so safe and secure, that like the Judge mentioned by our Saviour, *he feareth not God, nor regardeth man*, Luke 18. 2.

In the next place follow the Vertues enjoyned.

The first is *Confidence, or Faith in God*; which is directly opposed to trust in Riches, so as rich Men may have wherein to trust, though they trust not in Riches. God is the God of the Rich, as well as of the Poor, and the one as well as the other, are to put their whole trust in him.

And if we consider the Property here given to God viz. *Living, but trust in the Living God*; we shall see good reason to! trust in God, rather than in Riches. For our Wealth may vanish away, but he ever liveth, our Wealth may prove our bane, but he is both the giver and preserver of Life. Our trusting in God is here pressed by an Argument taken from Gods Bounty to us in these words, *who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*: So that the Lord is not only a *Living*, but also a *Giving* God, of whose gift you have not only your Life, but also your Riches; yea all that you have is the gift of God, who giveth you not only all needful things, but also *richly*, and as St. James saith, *liberally*, Jam. 1. 5. For God in his Gifts sheweth himself to be a God, and that two ways, 1. In the Freeness. 2. In the greatness of them. *He loadeth us with Benefits*; Psal. 68. 19 This rich bounty of God is a further motive to draw you to trust in him.

Yea, the Apostle addeth, that the Lord giveth us all things *richly to enjoy*; that is, not only for the present

present to spend, as being absolutely necessary; but also to lay up and reserve, so as it is not unlawful to lay up for after times. The Apostle presseth it on Parents as a bounden Duty, *To lay up for their Children*, 2 Cor. 12. 14.

Only let this lawful Liberty be limited with these and such like bounds.

1. That we lay up nothing but what is justly gotten. To lay up Riches of unrighteousness, is to kindle a Fire that may destroy both our temporal and our spiritual estate.

2. That we be not so covetous of hoarding up, as to deny our selves what is needful for our use and comfort, or to deny the Poor what is needful and necessary for them; but that we willingly give out as what is meet for our selves, so what is needful to the Poor.

3. That in our treasuring up, we aim not merely, wholly, and only at our selves, but withal have an eye as to the charge, which in particular, God hath committed to us, so also to the Church, Commonwealth, and Poor for the time to come.

4. That we exceed not measure in our treasure, no, though we aim at the fore-mentioned good Ends.

So much for the clearing the first Duty the Apostle would have pressed upon Rich Men especially, which is to *Trust in God*.

The Second is *Charity towards Men*, expressed in in several Phrases as first *by doing good*.

Charge them that are rich in this World, that they do good. So that the true Charity consisteth not only in compassionate Affections, and kind Speeches, but in good Deeds, as the word * in the Original implieth.

You Rich Men ought to be rich in good works, as the

the Apostle addeth. For God expecteth Fruit answerable to the Seed which he soweth. He giveth you plenty of Seed, therefore you must be plentiful in this kind of Fruit.

The next Branches, *ready to Distribute, willing to Communicate*, set forth the manner of our Charity.

The former implying a wise distribution of our Alms; for to distribute is not hand over head, without consideration to give, but according to the need of them to whom we give. The latter implying a willingness therein. As by distributing, good is done to others, so by willingness therein, much comfort is brought unto our Souls, and grace to the Work; and God doth best accept such, for he loveth a cheerful willing giver. 2 Cor. 9. 7.

In the next place follows the Reasons, to enforce the forenamed Duties taken from the benefit of performing them, which is in brief, assurance of eternal Life, implied in these Words, *Laying up in store for themselves, a good foundation, against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life*. The Apostle here, for their better Encouragement to lay out a portion of their Estate on good Works, telleth them, that they are so far from loosing what they so lay out, as in truth they lay up thereby in store for themselves.

Yea, they lay up a good foundation, that is such a Treasure as is like a Foundation in the Ground, that cannot be shaken or overthrown. This Treasure the Apostle thus expresseth, in opposition to the fore-mentioned uncertainty of Riches. So as by a cheerful distribution of this Worlds Wealth, they do indeed but exchange Uncertainties for Certainities, and so no fear of loosing by such bargains. Yea, they thereby obtain eternal life.

Quest. *Are then good Works the cause of eternal Life?*

Ans. Surely no, only they are the means and way of attaining thereto, and in this sense, is this Phrase here used, *That they may lay hold on eternal Life*: Having thus shewed you the occasion of the words; the Logical Resolution of them, their Sense and Meaning.

I should now according to my accustomed Method, come to such points of Doctrine, which the words do naturally afford unto us, but I must wave them, and fall upon that *Question, or Case of Conscience*, which was given to handle, viz.

Quest. How, or after what manner, must we give Alms, that they may be acceptable and pleasing unto God? In the resolving whereof, I shall endeavour to answer most of the Cases of Conscience about Alms-giving.

Ans. 1. It must be *with Justice*, giving only of our own, whereunto we have a just right and title, so much our Saviour implieth in that Precept of his, *Luke 11. 41.* where he saith, *Give alms of such things as you have*, whereby is not meant, such things as a Man hath by him (for one may have another Mans things by him) but such things as are his own, whereunto he hath a just title, and undoubted right, whereof he is the lawful Proprietor, hath the power of disposing those things, and those only he may lawfully and justly give away.

This Caveat is very necessary for many Reasons.

1. Because otherwise we shall sever Mercy from Justice, which should always go hand in hand; God hath put them together, *Prov. 21. 21. Dan. 4. 27.* And we must not put them asunder; indeed they are two Links of one and the same Chain, of which other Vertues and Graces are also other Links; so many Vertues, so many Links; Now if one Link of a Chain fall off, the whole Chain is broken, and down falls that which is drawn or held up by it; so

so we that are held out of the Pit of Destruction by the Chains of Graces, are in danger to fall into it, if one Grace be violated, and severed from the rest.

2. By giving that which is not our own, the excellency and glory of Charity is lost, of such Charity it may be said *Isaac*, where is the glory? *1 Sam. 4. 21.* The glory of Charity consists in this, that we are willing to part with our own, and therein to damifie our selves, for the relief and succour of others

3. By giving that which is not our own, we do wrong, and thereby make our selves liable to Restitution, so as Charity in such a Case, is a plain Injury. It is a case wherein a Recompence of Revenge may more be feared, than Recompence of Reward expected.

Quest. *Who may be said to give that which is not their own?*

Ans. *They who Filch, Steal or Rob for this very end, As Parents for Children, or Children for Parents, or one Friend for another. It is a Sin for one to Steal to satisfy his own Hunger, much more it is a Sin, to Steal for another, certainly it is a great wickedness to do Injustice, that we may do Acts of Charity.*

2. *Such as having raised up an Estate, or got something by indirect and unjust means, as by Lying, Swearing, False weights, Deceitful Measures, and the like; think to make up all by giving part to the Poor? For as the * Civilians say well, the good use doth not justify, the unjust getting of their Goods. And can any imagine that God will be pleased with those Mens Charity, who give Relief out of that which they have wrongfully gotten? Restitution should rather be made to such as have been wronged. And if neither the Parties wronged, nor their Heirs can be found, then what hath been wrongfully got, ought*

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* *Bonus usus non justificat injuste quaesitum*

to be given to the Poor, as their Heirs. An Example whereof we have in *Zachew*, Luke 19. 8. who having wronged many by Oppression, after his Conversion, offereth four-fold Restitution unto all whom he had wronged, and because many could not be found, to whom he should make it, he offereth to bestow half of his Goods to the relief of the Poor.

3. *Such as being under authority, and have no propriety in the things which they give; do notwithstanding give directly against, or simply without the consent of those who have the true propriety, do not give of their own, as Servants, Children, and others.* Indeed Servants and Children may lawfully give out of that which is their own, but not out of that which is their Masters, or Parents, without their allowance.

4. *Such as being joyned in Partnership with another, and give Alms out of the common Stock without the consent of their Partners, do not give that which is their own.*

5. *Such as are in extream Debt, and owe more than they are worth.* We shewed that Mercy and Justice must go together; yea, Justice must go before Mercy, and be satisfied before Mercy be shewed. They who owe more than they are worth, have nothing at all to give for Alms, such joyn Arrogance to Injustice, to make shew of a great Estate, and yet have none.

I shall close this with a Word of Advice to such as have a merciful and charitable Disposition, above their outward Condition and Ability; That they use the best diligence they can, by all lawful and warrantable Means, to get something to bestow upon charitable Uses. Let poor labouring Men take so much the more pains, that they may have somewhat to give; let Servants spare out of their Wages; let such as have no Propriety in any thing, but are wholly maintained by them under whom they

they live, as Children, Apprentices and others, do what they can to obtain something of their Parents, or other Governours, even for this very end, that they may have something to give. Let such as are in Debt, first pay their Debts, and then give Alms. Let such as have any way defrauded others, first make Restitution, and then relieve them that are in need. Finally, let such as live at the extent of their Estate, and much more, such as live beyond their Means, well weigh, wherein they may cut off some of their Expences to bestow on the Poor.

II. Alms-giving must be *with freedom and cheerfulness*, and not grudgingly; the Phrase of *giving Alm*, frequently mentioned in Scripture implieth as much, for to give, is freely to bestow. In the Law this Propriety of *Giving*, is plainly expressed, and by the contrary thus explained, *Thou shalt freely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him*, Deut. 15. 10. It is also implied under this Phrase, *thou shalt open thy hand wide*, v. 11. Alms must not be wrested and wrung out of a Man's hand, but he must of himself *open his hand*, that is, freely give. The word *wide* addeth Emphasis. And in the Gospel, we find it commanded by the Apostle, *Every Man according as he purposeth in his Heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver*, 2 Cor. 9. 7.

Many Motives may be produced to induce us hereunto: as,

1. *The pattern of God our Heavenly Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Redeemer.*

All the good that the Father doth, he doth most freely; who hath first given unto him? The * word which is used to set out that which God giveth, signifieth a *Free Gift*; and he is said to love

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* Rom. 5. 15. Τὸ χάρισμα. *Id quod gratis dando aliquis donat.*

us freely, Hos. 14. 4. To justifie us freely, Rom. 3. 24. And freely to give us all things, Rom. 8. 32.

This Reason of Gods love, The Lord set his love upon you, because he loved you, Deut. 7. 7, 8. doth clearly demonstrate the freeness of it.

The good also which the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Saviour doth for us, he doth most freely upon his own love, without any desert of ours: In this respect it is said, that he hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, Ephes. 5. 2, 25. The conjunction of these two, love and giving, plainly prove the freeness of the Gift. But further he expressly saith concerning the freeness of his Gift, I will give unto him that is a thirst of the Fountain of the Water of Life freely, Rev. 21. 5. And again, Whosoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely, Ch. 22. 17.

2. A second Motive may be taken from the Nature of Charity, which unless it be free, is not true and sound. Thus much the Apostle implieth under this Phrase, Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing, 1 Cor. 13. 3. By Charity he meaneth a free giving of that which is given, meely out of love and pity to him, unto whom he giveth.

3. Free giving makes that which is given to Man acceptable to God; for God loveth a cheerful giver, 2 Cor. 9. 7. Yea, God hath more respect to this manner of Giving, than to the greatness of the Gift. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not, Chap. 8. 12.

4. A free manner of giving, makes the gift the more acceptable to him that is made partaker thereof. As the Gift supplieth his want, so the manner of giving reviveth his Spirit. The Apostle rejoiceth in the Lord greatly, upon that care which the Philippians shewed to him in his necessity, Phil. 4. 10.

5. A free and cheerful giving much redoundeth to the glory of God, in that others are stirred up to praise

praise God for such Gifts. *David* praised God's glorious Name, when he saw his People offer willingly unto the Lord, 1 *Chro.* 28. 13, 14. And in this respect the Apostle saith of such Benevolence, that it is *abundant by many Thanksgivings unto God*, 2 *Cor.* 9. 2, & 12.

III. *With simplicity and sincerity*; according to that of the Apostle, *He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity*, *Rom.* 12. 8. That is, with an honest, plain and sincere Heart, not aiming therein at his own praise or applause, but at the glory of God, doing it in obedience to his command. This simplicity in giving, our Saviour hinteth unto us, where he saith, *When thou dost Alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth*, *Matth.* 6. 3. That is, let not the nearest that may be unto thee know what thou givest. The right hand is that hand wherewith we ordinarily give, yet the left hand is often assistant to it. Now though there should be any so near unto thee, as to be helpful and assistant, or at hand, yet let them not know it; make known thy charity to none.

Quest. *May we not give Alms if others be by?*

Ans. *Yea, if need so require*, as at publick Collections, or when in publick we see one stand in need. But we may not do it with a mind to have it known; our mind must be free from all such conceit, and we must so do it, as if we were alone. * *That Alms is not unacceptable which is given and seen of Men, but that which is given to be seen of Men.* So that the scope of our Saviour in the fore-mentioned place, is to take us off from all Vain-glory, in giving of our Alms, that in as much as in us lieth we should endeavour to hide and conceal our good Works from the Eye of the World.

E 5

IV. Our

* *Non est ingrata elemosyna quæ fit & videtur, sed quæ fit ut videatur.*

IV. Our Alms must be given with a *compassionate heart, with bowels of affection*. The Greek † word for *Alms* is derived from a word that signifies *Mercy*, which intimateth the disposition of the-giver, how he should be a *merciful Man*, whose bowels are moved at the misery of another, and thereupon contributes to his need with bowels of compassion.

In giving we must not only open our Hands, but our Hearts also in pity and compassion; we must draw out our own Souls (as the Prophet speaketh) as well as our purses to the hungry and afflicted, Psal. 58. 10. which is implied under several Expressions of Charity, used in Scripture by the Holy Ghost, as *He that hath mercy on the Poor, happy is he*, Prov. 14. 21. And again, *He that hath pity upon the Poor, lendeth unto the Lord*, Ch. 19. 17. And saith the Apostle St. Paul, *Put on, as the Elect of God, bowels of mercy*, Col. 3. 12. And saith the beloved Disciple St. John, *Whoso hath this worlds goods, and seeth his Brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* 1 John 3. 17. It is not sufficient to have an open liberal Hand, unless we have also an open and compassionate Heart; for if the * Sacrifice of our Alms-deeds be not mingled with the oil and incense of Mercy and compassion, it will not be acceptable unto God, who will have Mercy as well as Sacrifice. In contributing therefore to the Relief of the Poor; let our inward affection, go along with our outward action.

As helps hereunto,

1. Be well informed in the benefit that compassion bringeth, and that not only to thy distressed Brother,

ther,

† Ἐλεημοσύνη ab ἔλεος misericordia.

* Beneficentia ex benevolentia manare debet, Affec-
tus tuus nomen imponit operi tuo. Ambr. Offic. 30.

ther, who is succoured, but also to thy self, to whom in this case a promise of Mercy is made; *Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy*, Marth. 5. 7. Mercy from other Men, and Mercy from God himself.

2. *Well weigh the common condition of all*, how all things come alike to all, Eccles. 9. 2. as the Wiseman speaketh, so as thou also art subject to the same distress whereunto others are brought; and therefore as * *Aquinas* saith, we should have compassion on other Mens Misery, for the possibility of suffering the like; Which Argument the Apostle useth to the Hebrews, saying, *Remember them which suffer adversity, as being your selves also in the body*; that is, say some, as being Members of the same Body, but rather, as *Beza*, and others interpret the place, as being your selves in the Body of flesh and frailty, subject to the like miseries; † For so long as we do well here in these Houses of Clay, and carry about us this Earthly Tabernacle, we are all subject to the like Changes and Chances; which made old learned *Theodoret*, to reach his helping hand to those out-cast *Africans*, For when I saw (quoth he) their pitiful estate, I began to lay to heart the doubtful turnings and inversions of human things, and to fear least I my self might fall into the like evils.

V. Our Alms must be given seasonably; for as the Wise Man speaketh, *To every thing there is a season, and every thing is beautiful only in its time and season*, Eccles. 31 11. And therefore it will be our wisdom so to observe the Needs and Necessities of other Men, that we do not let slip any season or opportunity of doing good. According to that Exhortation of the Apostle, *As we have an opportunity,*
let

* *Propter possibilitatem similia patiendi* Tho. 2a, 2a, quest. 2. part. 2. † *Ut qui sitis & ipsi iisdem calamitatibus obnoxii*, Bez. in loc. *Theodor. Epist. 29.*

let us do good, Gal. 6. 10. The word *ἡ* in the Original translated *Opportunity*, properly signifies a *seasonable time*.

Quest. *Which are the most seasonable times of doing works of mercy?*

Ans. 1. When accidentally thou meetest with any fit Objects of Mercy, thou must not then pass them by with the *Priest and Levite*, Luke 10. 31, 32, 33, 34. but with the good *Samaritan*, presently pour the Oil and Wine of thy Charity into the Wounds of thy Brother, forthwith contributing somewhat to his Relief; for misery being the proper object of Mercy, thou shouldst then extend thy mercy unto such as are in want and misery.

2. When God by his Providence hath any way blessed and increased thy Stock and Store, by prospering thy Adventure at Sea, or thy Trading at Home, or by some great Legacy bequeathed thee by some of thy Friends, that is a seasonable time for thee to give out freely and liberally to the relief of the Poor, in testimony of thy thankfulness unto God for his bounty towards thee. I know it is usual with most Men upon the increase of their Stock and Store, to sacrifice to their own Nets, to ascribe their Wealth to their own Wit and Policy, and to say in their Hearts, *Their power, and the might of their hand hath given them this wealth*, Deut. 8. 17. But mark what *Moses* saith in the next Verse, 18. *Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, it is he that giveth the power to get wealth*. Seeing therefore what thou hast, thou hast received from God, whatsoever the means and instruments were of conveying it unto thee, is it not most just and equal, that in way of thankfulness thou shouldst set apart some portion thereof for the Poor and Needy?

3. The

3. *The Lord's day is another seasonable time of doing works of mercy*, according to the Apostles Rule and Direction; Now concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the Week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. Where by the first day of the week is meant, the Lord's-day, on which the Apostle enjoyneth the *Corinthians* to lay up something in store; implying thereby, that that is a very fit season, not only to do such works of Mercy, which are then offered unto us, but also to prepare for other times.

4. *Days of Thanksgiving* for some eminent Mercy, are another seasonable time of doing Works of Mercy. The remembring of the Poor at such times is expressly commanded in Scripture; *Thou shalt rejoyce in thine heart, thou, and thy Son, and thy Daughier, and thy Man-servant, and thy Maid-servant, and the Levites, the Stranger and the Fatherless, and the Widow*, Deut. 16. 14. Here the Stranger, the Fatherless, the Widow are commanded to rejoyce on their Days of Feasting, which presupposeth the Rich Mens sending Portions of their good chear unto them, which was the Practice of the People of God, as appeareth by that command of *Nehemiah* to the Jews on a Day of thanksgiving, *Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared*, Neh. 8. 10. And their day of thanksgiving from *Hamans* Conspiracy, is called *a day of feasting, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor*, Esth. 9. 22. And what more seasonable time can there be for shewing mercy to the Poor, than when we are blessing God for his manifold Mercies vouchsafed unto us?

5. *Days of Fasting and Prayer*, are another seasonable time of doing works of mercy. For how can we expect that God should shew mercy unto us, in removing those Judgments which we feel, or in preventing

preventing those which we fear; if we will not shew mercy to our poor Brethren, who stand in need of our Relief? In the Day of our Fasting therefore, let us at least give away to the Poor, so much as we save by our Fast. For as St. *Austin* in one of his Sermons saith, *† Ihen are our Fasts acceptable to God, if they which fast out of necessity, because they want Meat be relieved by us.* Let this therefore be always observed by us, that the Poor have the gain of our Fasting, and not our own Purfes.

VI. Our Alms must be given *readily and speedily*, without any needless delay, according to the counsel of the *Wise-man*, *With-hold not good from them to whom it is due*; Prov. 3. 27. That is, with-hold not any act of Charity from those who stand in need of thy help, *|| Say not unto thy Neighbour, go and come again, and to morrow I will give thee, when thou hast it by thee*, he that so delayeth his helping-hand, is next door to him that denieth. And therefore as any occasion offers it self unto us, let us speedily embrace the same, as knowing that a speedy Giver, is a double Benefactor, and the swifter that a Benefit cometh, the sweeter it tastes. And contrariwise a Benefit looseth its grace that sticketh to his Fingers who is about to bestow it. What then shall we think of their Charity, who put off all to their Death-beds, never giving any thing considerable to the Poor, till they can keep it no longer? These by their *last Will* and Testament they give somewhat to
the

† Tum grata sunt Deo nostra jejunia, si illi qui necessitate jejunant reficiantur à nobis, Aug. Serm. de Temp. 64. || Qui sic moratur, neganii proximus est, Senec. de benefic. l. 2. c. 5. Beneficia non sunt procrastinanda, sed tempestive danda, ut magis prodesse possint. Bis dat, qui cito dat. Ingratum est beneficium quod diu inter manus dantis hæsit, Sen. de Be.

Speedily, without needless delay. III

the Poor, yet questionless it is against *their Wills*, for could they have kept it longer, they would not have parted with it.

I shall desire such seriously to consider, these six things;

1. That if all Rich Men should do thus, the Poor would soon be starved for want of Bread

2. That this practice of theirs, is against the express command of God, † who requireth us to do good, and to communicate out of our store, while we have time and opportunity.

3. That they have no assurance of the continuance of their Wealth. For as the Wise-man speaketh, || *Riches many times make themselves Wings, they fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven*; they have *Eagles wings* to fly from us. And how many are there, who have out lived a fair Estate? If God in his Displeasure blasts a Mans Substance, it vanisheth away in a moment.

4. Though their Riches should continue with them, even to their Deaths, yet they have no assurance that God will give them grace to be liberal at their Deaths, who had never the goodness to be Charitable in their life-time.

5. That they have no assurance, that God will accept of their Death-bed Charity; What St. *Austin* speaketh of Death-bed Repentance, that *it is seldom true and hearty*; The same I may say of Death-bed Charity, it is seldom true and hearty, but for the most part rotten and hypocritical, proceeding from ill grounds, as Vain-glory, Conceit of Merit, and the like.

6. That they have no assurance of the true performance of their Will, that the Poor shall be the better for what is thereby given them. For how many

† Gal. 6. 10. Matth. 5. 16. || Prov. 23. 5. *Atas Aquilinas.*

many *Executors* have proved unfaithful to their *Trusts*, whereby many charitable *Gifts* have been clean perverted. And if *Friends* be so unfaithful unto us in our life-time, how can we but question their *Fidelity* after our Deaths? Oh therefore that all, whom the Lord hath blessed with an *Estate*, would in their life-time become their own *Administrators*, making (as one saith) their own hands their *Executors*, and their own *Eyes* their *Overseers*. For questionless that charity which is exercised in a Mans life-time is the best, and most acceptable unto God.

VII. Our Alms must be *bountiful* and *liberal*, giving out proportionably to what the Lord hath given unto us. This is implied in that command of God to his People, *Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy Brother, to thy Poor and to thy Needy in the Land*, Deut. 15. 11. that is, thou shalt give unto him bountifully and liberally. And our Apostle here in the Text, would have rich Men charged to *be rich in good works, even as God hath given them all things richly to enjoy*; 1 Tim. 16. 18. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required, Luke 12. 48. And therefore the same Apostles adviseth the *Corinthians* to give, as God hath prospered them, 1 Cor. 16. 2. To whom God hath given little of this Worlds Goods, of them he requireth but little, but to whom he hath given much, of them he requireth much. Rich Men therefore must not only give a portion of their Wealth to the relief of others, but also in some fit proportion to their Estate.

Quest. If any shall ask what is that portion or proportion of estate, which rich men ought to set apart for charitable uses?

Ans^r. It is an hard matter to determine the quantity and proportion of Mens Charity, the Scripture being silent herein, leaving this to the discretion and ingenuity of the prudent Christian. As
the

the Apostle speaketh, *Every man according as he pur-
poseth in his heart, so let him give, &c. A certain
quantity is not set him, that is left to the free purpose
of his own heart,* 2 Cor. 9. 7.

But yet tho' the Scripture giveth us no direct
Precept in this particular; it holdeth forth many Pre-
sidents for our imitation; as that of *Jacob*, who in
testimony of his thankfulness unto God for what he
should bestow upon him, vowed the tenth part
thereof unto God for pious and charitable Uses.
*And Jacob vowed a vow unto God, saying, of all that
thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto
thee,* Gen. 28. 20, 22. Of *Cornelius* it is record-
ed, that he gave much alms, Acts 10. 20. And the
* *Macedonians* are highly commended, for their
great Bounty and large Contributions. These Ex-
amples are left upon record for our Imitation. For
as the Apostle speaketh, † *whatsoever things were
written afore-times, were written for our learning,
and for our admonition.* So that though the quantity
of our Alms, how much we should give, is not ex-
pressly set down; yet this we find both commanded
and commended, by Precepts and Presidents, in the
Scripture, that we give liberally and bountifully in
some fit proportion to our Estates; that if we be
rich in this Worlds Goods, we should then be rich in
Good Works; sowing liberally, that so we may reap
liberally, 2 Cor. 9. 6.

Now that our Alms may be liberal, it must be
fitted to two things, viz.

1. The Necessity of the Receiver.
2. The Ability of the Giver.

That in our giving we should have respect to the
need and necessity of our Brother; the Law is clear
which saith, *If there be among you a poor Man one of
thy Brethren, thou shalt open thy hand wide unto him,
and*

* 2 Cor. 8. 3. † Rom. 15. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 11.

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and shall give him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Deut. 15. 7, 8. That we should likewise have respect to our own Ability, the Apostle St. Peter is as clear, where he saith, *If any Man Minister, let him do it as of the Ability which God giveth;* that is, let every one give with respect to his own Estate and Ability. Notwithstanding in cases of urgent necessity and great extremity, we are to strain our selves even above our Ability.

Here it may not be impertinent to answer another question (for I resolve to contrive all I have to deliver upon this Subject into this plain and easie Method) and that is this.

Quest. How many ways may Rich Men exercise their Charity?

Ans. 1. By laying out a portion of their Estate in such a way as directly tends to the Worship of God, the Advancement of Religion, the Salvation of Mens Souls; which I may not unfitly Term, a spiritual Charity.

And this may also be done several ways. As,

1. *By contributing towards the planting and propagating the Gospel where it hath not been.* A Work set on foot by divers in New England, but chiefly carried on by the Charity of well disposed People here in Old England.

2. *By setting up and maintaining of Lectures; the Preaching of the Word, being the ordinary means appointed by God for the bringing of Sinners to the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, whom to know is Life Eternal, Rom. 1. 16.*

3. *By adding to the maintenance of such settled Preachers, whose pains are great, and means small, through the covetousness of Impropriators, who ingross to themselves what doth more properly belong to the Minister.*

4. *By maintaining of poor Scholars at the University, in reference to the work of the Ministry, that so*
there

there may be a continual supply of Learned, Godly and Orthodox Ministers, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.

5. *By bestowing of Bibles on poor Children*, whereby through the Care of their Parents, they may be acquainted with the knowledge of the holy Scriptures, which are able to make them wise unto Salvation, 2 Tim. 3. 15. Memorable is the pious Gift of Sir John Fenner, who by his last Will gave six Pounds per Annum to several Out-parishes in London, for the buying of Bibles, to be distributed amongst poor Children. From my own experience I can say, that this Gift hath occasioned many poor People to teach their Children to read, that so they might be capable of those Bibles, which are to be given only to such as can in some measure read.

6. *By erecting of Country-Schools*, and endowing them with some competent Maintenance, for teaching of poor Mens Children, who have not wherewithal to pay for their Schooling; which will be a special means, not only to further their Civil, but likewise their spiritual Education. For thereby they will be made more capable of Divine Instruction. Experience teacheth us, how ineffectual the most powerful Ministry is upon an ignorant and unlearned Congregation. † Questionless, therefore the erecting of Country Schools is a Work of Charity, more noble in it self, more acceptable unto God, and more beneficial to the Kingdom, than the Building of Alms-houses, who are too often filled with swarms of idle drones. But though this *Spiritual Charity* is questionless the more excellent, as tending to a more excellent Object, namely, the Souls of our Neighbours, yet the Bodies of our Neighbours must be cared for as well as their Souls :

† *Docere simpliciter est melius quā pascere, Aquin. 2a, 2æ, quest. 32.*

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Souls: Our Charity therefore must also extend to them, and in this kind it may be practised and expressed.

II. *By a free and liberal giving to the relief of those who are in want,* of which I have already largely spoken.

III. *By a ready lending to such, as being in a Calling, want Stock, or other means to help themselves in their Trades.* This Duty of Lending, we find expressly commanded both in the Law and in the Gospel; in the Law, as in the place before quoted; *Thou shalt open thine hand wide to thy poor brother, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth, &c. Deut. 15. 8.* In the Gospel, Lend (saith our Saviour) *looking for nothing again;* that is, lend not only to such from whom you may hope by reason of their ability to receive your own again; but also to such, as by reason of their poverty may perhaps never be able to repay you. The Psalmist maketh this a note of a *righteous and a good Man,* that *he is ever merciful and lenderth; and that he sheweth favour and lenderth.* Psal. 37. 26. Psal. 112. 5. Where we see it is set down, as the Property of such a Man, that he is ready to lend to the Poor, to such as stand in need of his help, and that freely, without hope of Gain.

This Duty belongeth especially to rich Men, because the occasions of him that would borrow, usually require more than meaner Persons can well spare, they can better give a Penny than lend a Pound, though in many cases the lending our Brother a considerable Sum together, would be more beneficial to him, than it may be to give him half as much; there is therefore a noble and very generous Act of Charity, to be exercised this way, and it is peculiar to rich Men, who have it by them wherewithal to do it.

IV. Rich Men may and ought to express their
Charity,

Charity, by forgiving a Debt, in case the borrower be not able to repay it.

There be many who by the help of that which is lent them, God blessing their Pains in the Employment thereof, are able to repay what is lent. If there were not hope thereof, Men would rather give than lend so such.

But there are others, who, notwithstanding their Care and Pains in their Calling, thrive not; or by some accident suffer such loss and damage, as they are not able to repay what they have borrowed. In such cases Creditors are bound to forgive (at least to forbear their Debtors.) This is the Intendment of that Charge, *Lend, hoping for nothing again*, Luk. 6. 35. To take this Phrase simply, is to alter the nature of lending, and to turn it into giving. Herein lyeth the difference betwixt *Lending* and *Giving*. *Lending* is on condition to have again that which is lent, or at least the worth of it some other way: *Giving* is free, without any such Condition. That Advice of Christ, to *lend, hoping for nothing again*; hath respect to the Mind of the Lender, that he should not have his mind wholly and only upon the repaying of what he lendeth; but on the need of his Brother. He is not simply to lend, because he is perswaded he shall lose nothing, but have his own again. He is to lend, because he doth therein great kindness to his Brother, who stands in much need thereof.

The *|| Greek* word properly signifieth to *despair*, and so it may here be taken; as if he had said, when your Brother hath need to borrow, lend, though his Case be such that you even despair of receiving it again, though you run sum hazard of losing the Principal.

If

*|| ἀπελπίζοντες ἐλπίζον sperare; ἀπαιζον
desperare.*

If therefore it so fall out, that the Debtor be not able to repay what he borrowed, forgive it him. He lends, hoping for nothing again, who is willing to forgive, in case the Necessity of the Borrower require it. This was it which *Nehemiah* enjoined the rich *Jews*. *Neb. 5. 11.* Excellently doth our Lord press this Duty in the Parable of the two Creditors, where we have a commendable Pattern of a certain King, that in such a case forgave a great Debt; and of the sore revenge he Executed on one of his Servants, because he did not in like manner forgive his Fellow-servants, *Math 18. 23.*

In the Old Testament it is commended to us under the Phrase of *restoring the pledge*, *Ezek, 18. 7.* and *33. 1, 5.* *Gen. 38. 17, 18.* A Pledge was a Pawn left by a Debtor with his Creditor, for assurance to repay the Debt. Restoring the Pledge when the Debt was not paid, was an evidence of remitting the Debt.

V. By *Hospitality*, which consisteth not so much in a loving entertainment of Kindred, Friends and Neighbours, as of Strangers, as the word in the Greek † importeth.

This is that Hospitality; which is both commanded and commended to us in the Holy Scriptures. It is commanded in those known Precepts of the Apostle *St. Paul*; *Rom. 12. 13.* *Be given to Hospitality, and be not forgetful to entertain strangers*, *Heb. 13. 2.* Which is as much as to say, *Forget not Hospitality*, which is an entertaining of Strangers. And the Apostle *St. Peter* commands the Faithful to whom he writes

† φιλοξενία Compounded of φιλεῖν & ξένος. *Hospitalitas est species liberalitatis qua peregrinos & hospites ac presertim propier veræ Doctrinæ professionem exulantes, vera benevolentia, & aliquibus officiis hospitalitatis persequimur*, *Ursin. Cat.*

φιλοξενία ἐστὶ φιλοτεκνία πρὸς χεῖρον ξένων. *Clementens, Alexand.*

writes to use hospitality without grudging or repining,
1 Pet. 4. 9.

It is commended to us in the Practice of God's People ; as of *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 1, 3. of whom it is recorded, that he sat at his Tent-door, looking and waiting as it were for strangers to entertain them ; and so soon as he saw three Men, whom he took for such, he ran to invite them. And of *Lot*, that as he sate in the gate of *Sodom*, he saw two whom he conceived to be strangers, *them he exceedingly pressed to turn into his house, where he made them a feast*, Gen. 19. 3. And of the *Shunamite Woman* and her Husband, who shewed themselves Hospitable to the Prophet *Elisha*, as oft as he passed by their house, 2 Kings 4. 8. We have *Job's* Testimony of himself, *The stranger*, said he, *did not lodge in the streets but I opened my door to the traveller*, Job 31. 32. Which words set out *Job's* great Hospitality who kept open House for all passengers. In those days there was no common Inn for the Entertainment of Strangers, and therefore they must have lain out of doors, if some good Man had not entertained them.

Having such and so many Presidents of Hospitality, let us strive to follow them, labouring to write after their Copy, knowing assuredly that our labour of Love and Cost therein shall not be in vain. For I may truly say, it is a fruitful and gainful course of Liberality, never did any lose by it. *Some hereby have entertained Angels*, as the Apostle speaketh, *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for, hereby some have entertained Angels unaware*, Heb. 13. 2. In setting down this Recompence, the Apostle hath an especial respect unto two Instances, one of *Abraham*, the other of *Lot*. Gen 18. 2. Chap. 19. 1.

Angels came to both these, in the appearance of Men, whom they knew not, which sheweth God's high account of this Duty, in that once and again he

he sent Angels to such as were ready to entertain Strangers.

Yea, we may entertain Christ himself, and indeed in every entertainment of a poor godly stranger, Christ himself is entertained. And therefore in the great day of Judgment, we read that Christ puts in this good work by name; *I was a stranger and ye took me in*, Matth. 25. 35. Jesus Christ is a stranger in his Members.

In sacred Scriptures we find several others rewarded for their Hospitality, as

Rebeckah for her Courtesie to *Abraham's* Servant, *Gen.* 24. 22, 49. a meer stranger to her, was rewarded with precious gifts and a good Husband. The *Shunamites* Hospitality to the Prophet, *2. Kings* 4. was recompenced with giving her a Son, and restoring him to life. *The Widdow of Sereptabs* Hospitality to the Prophet *Elijah*, in receiving him into her House in a great Famine, was rewarded with preserving and increasng her Meal and Oyl, for it is expressly said, that *her barrel of meal wasted not, neither did her cruse of oyl fail, until the Lord sent plenty of food*, *1 Kings* 17. 16.

Gaius his Hospitality towards *St. Paul* in receiving him into his House, *Rom.* 16. 23. was recompenced with an honourable Testimony, which both *St. Paul* and *St. John* gave of him, *3 John* 5. 6.

Obj. Some may object and say, instead of a godly Man, I may happily entertain some dissembling Hypocrite, and so lose both my Gift and Reward?

Ans. 1. Our Charity ought to hope the best of every one, of whom we have no evident proof, or Presumption to the contrary, *1. Cor.* 13. 7.

2. If we receive a distressed Minister in the Name of a Minister of Christ, or private distressed Christian, in the name of a righteous Man, supposing him to belong to Christ; let him be what he will, we shall neither lose Gift nor Reward, Christ hath undertaken the Payment thereof.

V. Rich Men may and ought in some cases to express their Charity, even by selling what they have, for the relief of others, according to that of our Saviour, *Sell that ye have and give Alms*, Luke 12. 33.

Quest. *In what cases must rich Men sell their Estates, or any part of them for the relief of others?*

Ans^r. 1. *When they are extraordinarily called thereto*, as he that asked Christ, what he should do to inherit eternal Life? Christ said unto him, *Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the Poor*, Mark 10. 17, 21. Matth. 19. 27. That which the Apostles did in leaving their Callings to follow Christ, was equivalent to selling their Possessions.

2. *When they have defrauded and oppressed others*, and are rebuked for that Sin, or otherwise brought to repentance for the same, they ought to testify the truth of their Repentance, by a full Restitution, though it be by parting with their Possession. Thus did the Jews after their captivity restore to their poor brethren, whom they had oppressed with Usury, their lands and their houses, &c. Neh. 5. 11, 12. The Instance of Zachæus, Luke 19. 8. tendeth also to this purpose, who promised to give the half of his Goods to the Poor.

3. *When there are such a multitude of indigent persons in the Church, as the superfluity of such as are rich, is not sufficient to relieve them*, Acts 4. 34, 35. In this case, Christians in the Primitive Church that were possessors of Lands, or Houses, sold them, and brought the Prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

These particular Cases, being all of them somewhat extraordinary, do not patronize the platonical and familistical conceit of *Community of Goods*.

Which fond mistake of theirs, these Arguments amongst others, may sufficiently confute and evince

Propriety in Lands and Possessions to be lawful now in the Times of the Gospel.

1. In those very times wherein Christians for use had all things common, St. Peter expressly saith to Ananias, concerning the Lands which he sold, *whilst it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?* Acts 5. 4. Hereby it is manifest, that Men then had a Propriety in Goods and Lands.

2. The Duties prescribed to rich Men in the words of my Text, *to do good, to be ready to distribute, and willing to communicate.* prove as much.

3. The many Admonitions to pay *Debts*, to give tribute, and perform other like Duties of Justice; do imply a Propriety of Goods.

4. Exhortations also to *Lend* and to *Sell*, prove as much. For Men may not lend, nor sell that wherein they have not a Propriety, Luke 6. 35. Chap. 11. 41.

5. Inhibitions against stealing, and against all kind of Injustice presuppose a Propriety, Eph. 4. 28. 1 Th. 5. 4. 6.

Thus have I done with the seventh *Property*, requisite to the right manner of giving Alms; which is Bounty and Liberality, whereon I have somewhat the longer insisted, because it is the principal thing intended in my Text, *That they which are rich in this Worlds Goods, be rich in good works.* I shall add but one more.

VIII. Our Alms must be given *prudently*, with *discretion*, according to every ones need. It is said of the merciful Man, *A good man sheweth favour and lendeth, he will guide his affair with discretion*, Psalm 112. 5. † And truly there is a great deal of discretion to be used in the ordering of our Char-

† Turpissimum genus perdendi est inconsulta do-
manis.

ty; by putting a difference between Poor and Poor; for as one saith, *unadvised giving is the worst kind of losing.*

Prudence in Alms-giving is commended to us by our Saviour, in this word, *† distribute, distribute to the poor*, Luke 18. 22. For to distribute, is with discretion to give to sundry Persons, several Portions, according to their need. When mention is made of a prudent, discreet relieving the Poor, it is thus expressed; *Distribution was made unto every man according as he had need*, Acts 4. 35.

For the better performing this due Discretion in our Charity, let these Rules following be observed?

1. First, they are before others to be relieved, over whom we have an especial Charge, as they who are of our Household, of our own House and Family, as Wife, Children and Servants? For as the Apostle speaketh, *If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an Infidel*, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

2. In our Charity we ought to have a special respect unto our poor Kindred, for of those is the fore-mentioned place, 1 Tim. 5. 8. To be understood, where the word in the *Greek* || Translated House, is rendered *Kindred* in the Margin of your Bibles. For the Scope of the Apostle is to free the Church from unnecessary Charges, and to that end both impose the Care of providing for poor Kindred, upon such of their Relations as were able, 1 Tim. 5. 16.

3. They are to be relieved, who are of the Congregation, or Parish, whereof we are Members, especially they who dwell near unto us, in regard that we may best know their wants, *Deut. 15. 7, 8.*

F 2

4. They

† ἀνάδος πτωχῶς. || τῶν οἰκίαν.

4. They whom we have just cause to believe, that they are of the Household of Faith, *Gal. 6. 10.* For we may judge them to be true in their words; and believe their wants are such as they declare them to be. Now amongst the godly, such are especially to be relieved, and to be preferred in our Charity, who are imprisoned, or otherwise suffer for Christ and the Gospels sake; for Christ in a special manner is relieved in the Persons of such, as himself will acknowledge at the Day of Judgment, when he will pronounce that blessed Sentence of Absolution to such merciful Men; *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you; for I was an hungred and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink, I was a stranger, and ye took me in; I was in prison, and ye came unto me &c. Matth. 25. 34.*

5. They whom we discern to stand in need of present succour, though they be meer strangers whom we never saw or knew before. Hereof we have a worthy Pattern set before us in the good Samaritan, *Luke 10. 33. &c.*

6. They who are in Prison, or sick, or any other ways restrained from making their wants known unto others, *Matth. 25. 36.*

7. They of whose Piety, Poverty and Necessity credible Testimony is brought unto us, though we see them not our selves. Thus many of the Christian Gentiles sent relief to the Churches at Jerusalem upon the Apostles making known their wants *Acts 24. 17. Rom. 15. 25, 26.*

In these and other like cases we ought to extend our Charity according to the necessity of those whom we relieve, and our own ability. And not think it enough to give a few scraps of Bread and Meat, or some Half-pennies or Pence, to common Beggars at our Doors, or in the Streets. This kind of Alms savoureth more of vain outward ostentation, than of true inward Compassion: And

it more beseems our proud *Pharisees*, than humble Christians. A charitable Christian ordinarily giveth more to one whose distressed case he knows, or is credibly made known unto him, than these *Pharisees* do to many Beggars at many times.

Quest. But you'll say, do ye then utterly condemn all giving to common Beggars, as unlawful?

Ans. For answer to this Question, we must distinguish of common Beggars; some are strong and lusty, able to work, but would live by the sweat of other mens Brows. Others again are weak and impotent, unable to work through Age, Sicknesse, Lameness, Blindness, or the like.

These latter are fit Objects of Charity, and therefore ought to be relieved. But the former sort of Beggars, namely, the strong and lusty, who are able to work, but will not through Laziness, are no fit Objects of Charity, and therefore it is no Work of Charity to relieve such; For,

1. Their trade or life is no warrantable calling. It is a *disorderly walking*, which is expressly taxed by the Apostle, for saith he, *when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.* For we hear that there are some among you which walk disorderly, working not at all, 2 Thes. 3. 10, 11. It cannot be said of those, *As the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk*; or, *let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called*, 1 Cor. 7. 17, 20. God hath called none to such a Trade.

2. They are as Drones in a Hive of Bees; they live of the Labours of others, but bring in nothing to the Stock, as all the other Bees do. † They are as barren Trees, which receive Sap from the Earth, but yield no Fruit; unprofitable Burthens

F 3

of

† *Telluris inutile pondus.*

of the Earth, whose sad doom you may read, Luke 13. 7.

3. Many of them are of no particular Church, nor of any civil Society, but out of all Government in Church and State. In this and the former respect they may justly be stiled *Children of Belial*, without Yoak, *Deut. 13. 13.*

4. They with-hold, and in a manner rob the State wherein they dwell, of their Labour and Pains. The State or Kingdom is as a body, all that dwell therein are as so many Members; now Nature teacheth every Member to do somewhat for the benefit of the whole. These doing nothing thereto, sin against the Light of Nature.

5. † They who are truly poor shall by this means be neglected and scanted, whilst these lazy *Drones* devour that which of right belongeth unto them.

6. They are a great scandal and shame to the Government of the Nation wherein they are. For their course of Life implieth that no good Provision is made for the Poor; nor order taken to set such as are able to work, and to relieve such as are impotent. Now it is a great Sin to be a shame to ones own Country.

7. Their kind of Life is sensual and brutish; for as Brutes they spend all their days in seeking Food for their Bodies.

From hence it followeth, that they who relieve such, make themselves accessory to the fore-mentioned Sins.

There are some Allegations made for relieving such;

† *Qui largiuntur indignis ea quæ dignis conferri debebant, iria committunt absurda. 1. Nam & ipsi iusturam faciunt. 2. Et in bonos contumeliosi sunt. 3. Et malos roborant materia vitiorum suppeditata.*

such; but they are undue Allegations, and may easily be answered; the chiefest of them is this.

1. Christ commandeth to give to every man that asketh thee, Luke 6. 30.

Ans. To this I answer, that that Precept is to be taken in reference to a false Position of the Pharisees, which was this, that the Country-men and Friends only were their Neighbours, whom by the Law they were bound to love. That this was their opinion, is evident by this their gloss on the Law; *Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy*, Matth. 5. 43. And by the Parable, which Christ produceth to demonstrate to the Lawyer who was his Neighbour. In opposition to that false Doctrine, Christ commands to give, not to Friends only, but to every Man, Luke 10. 29, 30, &c. So as the Scope of that Precept is, to take away respect of Persons in Alms-giving: That we should not restrain this Duty of Charity to Country-men, Kindred and Friends; but extend it also to Strangers, Enemies, and to every one, that being in need crave it of us.

2. A second Allegation is, *That many beggars may perish if they be not relieved.*

Ans. In case of necessity they may and must be relieved, either at Doors in Streets, or other like places, where their necessity is manifested. Necessity (as we speak) hath no Law. It dispenses with ordinary Rules. Instance that which Christ produced concerning David. *He entered into the House of God, and did eat the shew bread, which was not lawful*, Matth. 12. 4.

I have done with the Question allotted to me, give me leave to add a few words, for the more profitable pressing this most necessary, but much neglected Duty of Charity; I shall dispath my intendment herein.

1. By shewing you by what means you may obtain this Grace.

2. Give you some Motives to quicken you up to a conscionable performance of the Works of it.

The Means are these,

1. *Meditation*, seriously meditate.

1. Of the *Necessity* of it, which ariseth from the Lord's exprefs Charge and Command, unto which we are bound to yield obedience. It is often commanded both in the Old and New Testament. That I may not be tedious, I shall give you but two or three Proofs, *Deut* 15. 11. A place I often mentioned for the excellency, and exceeding Pertinency of it to this purpose. Saith the Lord to his People there; *The poor shall never cease out of the Land; therefore I command thee, saying, thou shalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the Land; that is, thou shalt give unto him freely and bountifully.* And saith our Saviour in the New Testament; *Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away,* *Luke* 5. 42. And saith the Apostle, *To do good, and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased,* *Heb.* 13. 16. In which words he presseth the Duty with a forcible Motive; for who would not do that which is well-pleasing unto God? Who is bountiful in rewarding the least good we do upon his command.

This Duty of Alms-giving being so expressly commanded in Scripture, it is not in our power to omit or neglect the same; neither can any Creature give us a Dispensation against the Creators Command. A Prophet stileth Omission of that which God enjoyneth to be done (yea though that Omission were but in part, and that upon a fair pretence) *Rebellion, which is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness, which is an iniquity and* *slavery,* *1 Sam.* 15. 23. Against him who failed in performing the charge enjoyned him (though he were a King) this Doom is denounced, *because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being King,*

King, Verse 26. In like manner may God reject such as neglect this Duty of *Charity*, when he calls them to it, from being Kings and Reigning in Heaven. We have a manifest instance thereof, *Matth. 25. 41, 42, 43.*

Now the giving of Alms being a Duty so expressly commanded in the Holy Scriptures, it cannot therefore be accounted a Matter meerly arbitrary, left to a Man's own will, to give or not to give. But it is a bounden Duty, which they that in any competent measure can do, must not omit, which consideration cannot but be a strong incitation unto us, to make conscience of this Duty of Alms-giving, as occasion is offered, and not to over slip Opportunities, that by the Divine Providence are offered unto us. Should we neglect that which our Lord hath expressly commanded? That whereunto by vertus of that Command we are bound? That whereof we are to give an account? Let us upon the Lord's Commands do what in this kind we can: And when we have done what we can, say, *We are unprofitable servants, we have done what was our duties to do,* Luke 17. 10.

2. Of the *Equity* of this Duty of Alms-giving. It is a most equal thing, that he who hath wherewithal, should give to him that hath not. The Equity ariseth both from the Divine Providence, and also from the Instability of a Man's State and Condition.

1. God for this end gives more to some than to others, that they who have more abundance, should give out of their abundance to them who are in want. This was typically signified by the gathering of *Manna*, which though it were rained down from Heaven, yet the Lord would not allow, that they who had gathered much, even more than was needful for themselves and their Household, should hoard up their Superfluity, but enjoyned them to communicate of their abundance to such as had not

enough. The which the Apostle applieth to the giving of Alms out of our abundance to those who want; which he stileth *equality*, 2 Cor. 8. 14.

2. Man's State is so variable, as he who now hath, may quickly want; and in want desire to be succoured by such as have. It is thereupon most equal, that they who would be succoured in their need, should be willing to succour the need of others. This Equity doth Christ himself press; *all things whatsoever you would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them*, Matth. 7. 12. And as a ground to enforce this the further, he addeth, *for this is the Law and the Prophets*. Hereby implying, that this Doctrine is contained in the Law and the Prophets; but that is not all, these words, *this is the Law and the Prophets*, intend that the Sum of the Law and the Prophets consisteth therein; and the main scope of them tendeth thereunto; namely, so far as they conain the Duties of Man to Man. So evident is the Equity hereof, even by the Light of Nature, as the very Heathen who wanted the Light of God's Word, discerned it. Well therefore might the Apostle enforce this Duty of Charity upon this ground thus, *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them*, Heb. 13. 3. That is, be helpful to others which cannot help themselves, as you would have others afford succour unto you, if you were succourless.

3. Meditate of the manifold singular Benefits which do follow and accompany a conscionable performance of this Duty; for thereby we discharge our Duty to God, who requireth it at our hands, and as 2 consequent thereof we shall glorifie God, for it tends much to his praise and glory, when in such works as himself hath commanded, his Children testifie their Obedience and Thankfulness; and therefore saith our Saviour, *Herein is my Father glorified, if ye bring forth much fruit*, John 15. 8.

And

And by our Charity, 'as we shall grace and adorn our holy Profession, so we shall stop the Mouths of wicked Men, from speaking any evil of us or of our Profession; for how are Men apt to speak of us, and of our Profession, according to the Fruits we bring forth, and the good works which we do.

And as we shall thereby comfort, and make glad the Hearts of the poor and distressed; so we shall refresh our own Souls, in that our works of Charity will evidence our Fruits to be sound and saving, lively and effectual; for as *Rachel* said to *Jacob*, *give me children or else I dye*; in like manner saith Faith to the Soul of a Christian, *Give me children*, let me bring forth good works, *else I dye*, and have no life in me, according to that of the Apostle *St. James*, *Faith without works is dead*, *James 2. 26*. It's not a living but a dead faith, that manifests not its life by working.

II. As Meditation, so Prayer is a special means on our part to be performed, for attaining unto this Grace of Charity. I say earnest and fervent Prayer unto God for the same; for as he is the Fountain and Author of every good gift, so he hath sanctified Prayer, as the means of obtaining every good gift from him.

Be earnest therefore with God in Prayer, that he would be pleased to give thee as a compassionate Heart towards the needs and necessities of the poor Members of *Jesus Christ*; so an open hand, that thou mayest freely and liberally contribute unto them, according to their necessity and thy ability: Beg of God that as he hath blessed thee with some competent estate, so he would add this Mercy, to give thee an heart to give out proportionably to what he hath given thee; and that in testimony of thy love and thankfulness unto him.

But alas how few are there who in their Prayers unto God, are mindful of this Grace of Charity?

How

How few are there who ever begged of God, that he would be pleased to implant this noble Grace of Charity in their Hearts? If upon examination thou findest thy self to have been faulty therein, go take up a new resolution to be earnest with God in Prayer for his Grace especially, and never to give over, till thou findest it in some measure wrought in thy Soul, till thou find thy self upon all good occasions ready to distribute, and willing to communicate to the Needs and Necessities of thy poor Brethren.

III. *Diligence in our Callings*, is another means on our part to be performed, for the practising of Charity. He that would be charitable to the Poor in their Needs and Necessities, must be diligent and industrious in his Calling, so that he may have wherewithal to express his Charity; for Mens diligence in their Callings is usually crowned with a Blessing, according to that of the Wise-man, *The hand of the diligent maketh rich*, Prov. 10. 4. And again, *The Soul of the diligent shall be made fat*, Ch. 13. 4. That is, shall be enriched with outward Blessings: And the Greeks || say, *That plentifulness follows painfulness, and that all things are made servants to care and industry*? And therefore the Apostle St. Paul prescribeth diligence and industry in a lawful Calling as a means of Charity; † *Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his own hands the thing which is good, that he may have it to give to him that needs*. This is one end we should pronounce to our selves, in the works of our Callings, namely, that through God's Blessing on our Pains and Endeavours, we may have, not only sufficient for our own Livelihood, and of them that belong unto us, but also somewhat for the

|| Πόρω πλεον̄ ο̄π̄δ̄αῑ τῆς ἐπιστηλαίας δ̄ύλᾱ
πάντα γίνεται. Stob. † Eph. 4. 28.

the Relief of others; Solomon describing the virtuous Woman, saith in the first place, *That she seeks wool and flax, and works willingly with her hands*; and then, *that she stretcheth out her hands to the Poor, yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy*, Prov. 31. 13.

IV. Be careful to prevent all Superfluities in your Expences. As diligence in your Callings, so Frugality in your Spending, is a special means for the practice of Charity; *Frugality*, saith *Justin*, *† is the Mother of Virue*; I am sure it is the Foundation and Supporter of Charity, for let a Man's Estate be never so great, yet if there be not Frugality used in the management thereof, there will be but little found for Works of Charity. And on the other side, though a Man's Estate be but mean and low in the World, yet if there be Frugality used in the management of it, there will be ever somewhat for Charitable Uses. As therefore thou desirest to be Charitable, be careful to prevent all unnecessary Expences; I mean, let not thy Apparel be too costly, for how can it be expected, that they should be charitable, ready to distribute to the Necessities of others, who lay out the greatest part of their Estates upon their Backs. Neither let thy Feastings be too frequent, nor too chargeable; which is noted for one of the sins of the old World, who were given to eating, Matth. 24. 38. as the word || in the Original properly signifieth. Neither let thy Recreation be too expensive in playing more for Money than for Refreshment. Oh! that such of you who spend so much Time and Money on your Recreations; as if God had sent you into the World, and given you the good things of the World, for
no

† *Genetrix virtutum frugalitas*, Just. l. 90.
|| *τρωγολες*,

no other end than to follow your Pleasures; would consider what a fearful Reckoning you are to make at the Day of Judgment, not only of your precious Time lavishly mis-spent, but also of your Estate wickedly lost, or wasted? When in thy account there shall be found so much wasted in Gaming and Pleasures, and so little given to the Poor.

V. *Set apart something out of thy Incomes and Receipts, as a sacred Stock for charitable Uses.* For,

1. Hereby thou wilt be fitted and prepared with Matter for such uses, having always somewhat by thee, to give upon any good occasion.

2. By this means thou wilt more readily and willingly, more freely and liberally contribute to the Needs and Necessities of others, having a stock by thee for that very end and purpose. † All Men naturally are hard-hearted, and close-handed, and thereupon are very hardly perswaded to part with any thing considerable for charitable Uses. But this consecrating before-hand a part of thine Estate for the use of the Poor, will cause thy Charity to flow out more freely and bountifully.

Now a sacred Stock for the Poor may be raised two ways?

1. *By setting apart something every Lord's-day, out of thy comings in the Week before, according as God hath prospered thee; which practice we find prescribed unto us, by the Direction of the Holy Ghost, and warranted unto us by Apostolical Authority, for saith the Apostle St. Paul to the Corinthians, Now concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye, 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. Upon the first day of the Week* (which

† *Ad opes honoresque expetendos, ad commulandas divitias, furiosa est nostra libido, infinita cupiditas, Calv. Insti. l. 31. c. 7.*

(which is the Lord's-day) let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him. That is, according to the ability wherewith God hath blessed him, let him set apart something for the relief of the Poor, especially the poor Saints.

This Rule I would commend to such who live upon their daily Labour. But for those Merchants, Citizens and Trades-men, who sell much of their Wares upon trust, and know not certainly at the Weeks end what they have gained; I would advise such, when they have cast up their Accompts at the Years end, to set apart something of *their comings in that year, according as God hath prospered them, for charitable uses*; as they expect God's Blessing upon their Trading the Year following.

2. *By consecrating unto God a certain portion of thy yearly Incomes and Revenues for charitable Uses.* What this portion should be I dare not determine, the Scripture being silent therein, only in the general, we are commanded to *give out proportionably to what God hath given unto us, that they who are rich in this worlds goods, be rich in good works*; But this I can say, that the most that I have heard read of, who have taken this course to consecrate unto God a certain portion of their Estate to charitable Uses, have followed the Example of Jacob || after his Vow, so likewise hath he blessed divers others after their Vow unto God.

An † eminent Divine of this City, now with God, in his Funeral Sermon, at the Burial of a Merchant, speaking of his *Charity*, saith, that at the first effectual Call, among other things he then resolved upon, this was one, *to set apart every year a tenth of his gain for the relief of the poor*; and that
God

|| Gen. 28. 22. † Mr. Tho. Gataker, in his Funeral Sermon at the Burial of Mr. Jo. Parker, Merchant and Citizen of London.

God from that time forward abundantly advanced his Estate.

Another eminent Divine † in his Funeral Sermon at the Burial of the Lord *Harrington*, speaking of his Charity, declared, that in his life-time he gave the tenth part of his yearly Revenue to the Poor.

And from mine own experience I can tell you of one yet living, who finding little coming in by his Trade, resolved upon two things;

1. *To be more careful in Sanctifying the Lord's Day.*

2. *To set apart the tenth of his Increase for charitable Uses.* Whereupon he gained so much in a few years, that he gave over his Calling, and ever since lived upon his Rents.

Many like Instances I could give you of some that are Dead, and others yet living, who have devoted, some a tenth, and others a fifth part of their whole Estate to Pious and Charitable Uses. Which I do not propound as a General Rule to all good Christians; for, some there are who have no more than is necessary for the comfortable support of themselves and family, from whom less is required for the relief of others. But I question whether such, whom the Lord hath blessed with a plentiful Estate, so that their necessary Expences are, or might be, far less than their Incomes, can be accounted *rich in good Works*, unless they give at least a tenth part of their whole yearly Income to charitable uses. I say, of their whole yearly Income, *without first deducting* any part thereof for Diet, Cloaths, or other Necessary Expences; for the tenth of the Remainder will be a very inconsiderable Proportion for a rich Man to devote to Charity, and far short of that which the Scripture seems to call

call for. It is recorded of the *Jews*, that very many amongst the richer sort, who are devout in their Religion, do usually give away a tenth part of their Estate to charitable Uses. And is it not very unbecoming *Christians*, who are rich in this Worlds Goods, to fall short of the *Jews* herein?

Having thus done with the Means on our part to be performed for attaining unto this Grace of Charity;

Come we now to the Motives, to quicken us up to a Conscionable Performance of the Works of it. I shall touch only upon these Four,

1. The Excellency of the Duty.
2. The Piety which is contained in it.
3. The Profit which ariseth from it.
4. The Damage which follows upon the neglect thereof.

I. The first Motive or Inducement to Charity may be taken from *the Excellency thereof*. I suppose that all will grant that the greatest Excellency that a Creature can attain unto, is to be like his Creator. That Excellency wherein Man was at first Created, is thus set out, *God created Man in his own Image*, that is, *in his own likeness*, Gen. 1. 26, 27. And that excellency wherewith we shall be glorified in Heaven, is set out by our likeness to Christ; for it is said, *Our Bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious Body*, Phil. 1. 21. Yea, in the whole Man, *when he shall appear, then we shall be like him*, 1 Joh. 3. 2.

Now while we live on Earth, there is nothing wherein we can shew our selves more like unto God, than in shewing Mercy, and in succouring such as stand in need. When God sets himself to proclaim his Name, he most insisteth upon his *Mercifulness and Goodness*, Exod. 34. 6. Christ himself doth press this Motive to enforce this Duty, thus, [*Be ye merciful, as your Father is merciful*, Luke 6. 36.] The excellency of Charity doth herein

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herein further appear, that Christ hath set the Poor in his own room; insomuch as they who relieve the Poor, do therein relieve Christ himself. So much doth Christ acknowledge, where he saith to such as succoured the Poor, *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, yea have done it unto me*, Matth. 25. 40. Is it not an excellent thing to relieve Christ? They then that relieve the Poor, do an excellent work. As it is a great aggravation of persecuting the true Professors of the Faith, because therein they persecute Christ himself, as is implied under this Divine voice that affrighted *Saul*, whilst he was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me*, Acts 9. 1, 4. So it is a great commendation of true Charity, that Christ himself is relieved thereby.

II. Another Motive is the *Piety*, which in and by performing this Duty of Alms-giving is manifested. *Piety*, I say to God. For pure Religion and undefiled before God, is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their affliction, Jam. 1. 27. Here he puts two Particulars, for all kinds of Charity: And by this Phrase, *Pure Religion before God is this*, he intends Four things,

1. That it is but a meer shew of Religion that is without Charity.

2. That true Religion will make Men Charitable.

3. That Charity will prove Men to be truly Religious.

4. That Works of Charity are as acceptable to God, as Duties of Religion. For God accounts Charity *an odour of a sweet Smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, and well-pleasing unto him*, Phil. 4. 18. The Poor and Needy are to God as the Altars of Burnt-offerings and Incense were under the Law. Those things which were laid on them, and offered up, were given to the Lord, and as a Gift accepted by him.

him. Even so are Alms given to the Poor, the Poor are the Altar, Alms the Sacrifice. Now who would not dispose so of that which he hath, as God may account it given to him, and answerably accept it? On this very ground doth the Apostle incite the *Hébrews* to this Duty, in this manner, *To do good, and to Communicate forget not, for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased,* Heb. 13. 16. Thus we see how Works of Charity are not only useful and Profitable to Man, but also acceptable and well-pleasing to God, which consideration addeth much life to the Duty here pressed.

III. A third Motive is, *the manifold profit wherewith it is rewarded.* * Profit and Advantage is the Motive, which, for the most part, spurs Men on to labour and take pains, to rise early, and sit up late; to venture goods, life and all they have. Witness the pains, travels, watchings and adventures of Labourers, Work-men, Trades-men, Farmers, Merchants, Mariners, &c. Yet that profit which they aim at, is but earthly and temporary; and their hope of attaining it uncertain. Surely works of Charity give an assured hope of far greater, and better profit than Earth can afford.

In general it is promised, *That if we cast our Bread upon Waters, we shall find it after many Days;* that is, if we give † Alms to the Poor, where all we do may seem to be cast away, as if it were thrown into the Sea; yet in due time will it return to us with advantage. And least any should be discouraged from doing Works of Charity, our Saviour assureth us, *That whosoever giveth but a cup of cold Water* (which is one of the least acts of Charity we can

* *Omnes expetimus utilitatem, ad eamq; rapimur, nec facere aliter ullo modo possumus, Cic. Offic. 3.* † *Fecundus est ager pauperum, cum reddit donantibus fructum, Aug. Serm. de Divite.*

can perform) *shall in no wise loose his reward,* Mat. 10. 42.

If in special it be demanded what profit is there of Charity? I answer, (as the Apostle did of Circumcision) *much every way,* Rom. 3. 12. Yea, I may say of *Charity,* as the Apostle doth of *Piety,* *It is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,* 1. Tim. 4. 8.

In this life is promised.

1. Sufficiency, *He that giveth to the poor shall not lack;* Prov. 28. 27. that is, he shall be secured from Want and Penury; God will not suffer him to be brought to penury, who hath been Charitable to the Poor.

2. Not only sufficiently, but likewise abundance; for saith the Wise-man, *Honour the Lord with thy substance,* Prov. 3. 9, 10. by giving freely and chearfully to charitable and pious Uses; *so shall thy Barns be filled with plenty, and thy Presses shall burst out with New-wine,* which is an hyperbolical Expression, implying Plenty and Abundance.

3. Good success in what he enterpriseth, according to that of Moses, *Thou shalt surely give him, because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy Works, and in all thou puttest thy hand unto,* Deut. 15. 10.

4. Deliverance out of Trouble. For saith the Psalmist, *Blessed is he that considereth the Poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble,* Psal. 41. 1.

5. Protection against Enemies, as it follows in the next Verse, *Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.*

6. Succour in Sicknes, as the Prophet goes on Ver. 3. *The Lord will strengthen him upon the Bed of languishing,* that is, the Lord will comfort and support him in his Sicknes, and at length restore his strength again. *Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness;* that is,

is, thou wilt give him ease and rest, as they do to sick Men that make their Beds.

7. To pass by other particulars, *Blessedness* which compriseth under it all manner of commodities, is promised to the Charitable Person, *Prov.* 22. 9. And in *Psal.* 41. 2. It is said, *He shall be blessed upon the earth; yea and as the resurrection of the just,* *Luk.* 14. 14.

8. This Promise is extended to his posterity, for *his seed shall be blessed,* *Psal.* 37. 26.

These and other like promises of temporal, spiritual and eternal Blessings, being made by the Lord God of Truth, may with much confidence be rested upon. For Gods Words are Deeds, his Promises Performances.

In the life to come, merciful Men shall *inherit the kingdom prepared for them, from the foundation of the world,* *Matth.* 25. 34.

There are among others, two Metaphors often used by the Holy Ghost, in setting out Alms-giving, which do much amplify the commodity thence arising.

One is taken from *lending*; the other from *sowing*.

1. Alms-giving is set forth in Scripture by *lending*; yea, to such a lending, whereby we have not only the principal restored, but with great increase. And whereas such as put forth their Money unto Men, can expect but six in the hundred; if we in obedience to the command of God, shall freely part with our Money to the use of the Poor, for their relief, we shall receive an Hundred for Six, yea an Hundred for One, and † Eternal Life to boot. And we need not to doubt of the payment; for though the Poor be never so unable, yet we have an all-sufficient *Surety*, even God himself, who hath

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hath undertaken to pay whatsoever is thus put forth, according to that of the Wise-man, *He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he pay him again,* Prov. 19. 17. Where you have Gods Counter-bond to save you harmless, in which he both acknowledgeth the Debt, and promiseth payment. And what better security can any Man desire than a Bond, under Gods own Hand? The consideration whereof should methinks make us willing to embrace any opportunity of putting out our Money to this great advantage.

2. As for the other Metaphor of sowing, it is in Scripture applied to Alms-giving, under this Phrase, *He hath dispersed,* Psal. 112. 9. As the Husbandman disperseth his Seed which he soweth in the Earth; so doth the Alms-giver his Alms, therefore this is added by way of Exposition, *He hath given to the Poor.* The Apostle also applieth unto Alms-giving this proverbial Speech, *He which soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully,* 2 Cor. 9. 6. Now what is it that ordinarily bringeth forth a greater increase than sowing seed in fertile Ground? It is said of *Tsaac*, that he sowed in the Land, and received in the same year an hundred fold, Gen. 26. 12. And Christ saith, that good ground beareth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold, Matth. 13. 8. Now Alms-giving is one of those things that shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting Life.

If therefore profit and advantage may be a Motive to stir us up unto any thing, surely it should be a Motive to incite us unto Liberality in Alms-giving, to be bountiful in contributing to the Relief of the Poor.

For it is a most certain truth, that giving to the poor, is the surest and safest way of getting. For though Humankind may sometimes lose the benefit of their Seed sown, through Mill-dews or unreasonable

sonable Weather; and such as put their Money to use, may come short of their Principal: Yet he who with an honest and sincere Heart giveth to the Poor, shall in no wise lose his reward. For as the Wise-man speaketh, *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth*, Prov. 11. 24. Intimating unto us, that this scattering is the best way of increasing: And indeed so it is, for hath not our Saviour promised, *That if we give it shall be given unto us, good measure pressed down, and shaken together*, Luke 6. 35. Here God gives us as it were a Bill of his Hand, and enters into Bond, and becomes Surety with the Poor, that what we give shall be repayed with advantage. This is a *Paradox* to worldly Men, that *giving should be the safest way of getting and increasing*, yet nothing more clearly laid down in the Scripture, and found to be true by the experience of God's People.

4. The Fourth Motive and Inducement is *the damage which may ensue upon the neglect of Alms giving*. Though it argue a kind of servile disposition to be moved with fear of loss or gain, to a Duty; yet of this disposition are many; and in that respect this may be added as an inducement to the Duty.

The Damage that may arise from the neglect of Charity, when it ought to be shewed, is in the kind thereof as large as the fore-mentioned Benefits of performing the Duty, in the kind of it.

For the neglect of the Duty doth not only cause a forfeiture of all the fore-mentioned Benefits, arising from the performance thereof, but also pulleth upon the neglecters head, many evils. Where the Wise-man saith, *The merciful man doth good to his own soul*; he addeth, *but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh*. Soul and Flesh are the two essential parts of a Man; both the one and the other are Synecdochically put for the whole Man; even for the Person. By a *cruel Man* is meant an unmerciful, or a hard-hearted Man; for he is opposed to a merciful

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merciful Man. The meaning then of the Proverb is this; as a merciful Man doth good, not only to his poor Brother, to whom he sheweth Mercy, but also to himself: So an hard-hearted Man doth not only grieve his distressed Neighbour in affording him no Succour, but also brings much damage to himself. *For he that withholdeth more than is meet, cometh to Poverty*, Prov. 11. 17. With-holding is there opposed to scattering, which word hath reference to casting or sowing Seed on the Earth to bring forth a Crop; and thereby is meant Alms-giving. On the contrary, *With-holding more than is meet*, implies a denial of Alms, when there is just cause to give. Justice and Equity require this Duty (as we have before shewed) so as that Phrase doth much aggravate this kind of Unmercifulness; and as a just Punishment thereof, that which covetous Men by refusing to give, seek to prevent, shall fall upon them, even *Poverty*.

And if in any Distress they shall be forced to seek help of others, even they shall be neglected as they neglected others. The Wise-man testifieth as much in these Words, *Who so stoppeth his Ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself and not be heard*, Prov. 21. 13. Not only other Men, but also God himself will refuse to hear his cry. *Dives*, who refused to relieve *Lazarus*, * could not obtain any to afford him a Drop of Water to cool his Tongue, when he was tormented in Hell Flames. It is expressly said, *that he shall have judgment without mercy, who hath shewed no mercy*, James 2. 13. || For God deals with Men according to their dealing with others.

Finally, as Blessings are promised to merciful Men, so Curses are denounced against unmerciful
 † Men.

* Luke 16. 24. || Mark 18. 33.

† Men. As under Blessings, all manner of Good things are comprised, so under Curses, all manner of Evils. Unmerciful Men shall have the Curses of Men, and People shall curse them, Prov. 11. 26. And at the great Day of Judgment, they shall be pronounced cursed by the great Judge: For then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels: For I was an hungred and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink, &c. Matth. 25. 41, 42, &c.

Having thus done with the Motives, I shall close this Discourse with answering some Objections, which keep back many from a conscionable discharge of this Duty.

Obj. 1. Some object their great Charge, having a Wife and many Children to provide for; and are ready to say with the Apostle, That Parents ought to lay up for their Children, 2 Cor. 12. 14. And if any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an Infidel, 1 Tim. 5. 8. how then can we be liberal to the Poor?

Ans. 1. I deny not but Parents ought to provide for their Children, so far as they may with a good Conscience. But know that the same Apostle who commands you to lay up for your Children, doth likewise command you to lay out a considerable part of your Estate for the succour and relief of others. As Gal 6. 10. As we have opportunity let us do good unto all, especially unto them who are of the household of Faith, Heb. 13. 16. But to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifice the Lord is well pleased. If therefore you would approve your selves sincere Christians, you must bear an e-

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qual

qual and impartial respect to all and every the commands of the Lord, making conscience of one Duty as well as of another.

2. The greater thy love, and stronger thine affections are to thy Children, the more liberal and bountiful shouldst thou be to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, that thereby thou mayest entail God's Blessing upon the Persons and Estate of thy Children. I am sure thou wilt grant that without God's blessing, all thou shalt bequeath unto thy Children will little avail them; and what better course canst thou take to procure God's blessing upon that part of thy Estate which thou shalt leave them, than freely to communicate some part thereof to pious and charitable Uses? For as the Psalmist expresseth it, *The seed of the merciful shall be blessed*, Psal. 37. 26. Whereby is implied, that thy Mercy and Liberality to the Poor, will entail God's Blessing upon thy Children.

Very solicitous many are to entail their Lands and Houses on their Posterity, that they may continue in the same Family: But I know no surer way, than in their life-time, to communicate a considerable part of their Estate to the Poor. * And thus by taking somewhat from your Childrens Portion for the relief of the Poor, you may exceedingly advance their Estate. Hath God blessed thee with Children? In Christian discretion then thou shouldst be charitable, that thereby thou mayest procure God's Blessing, both on thy self and Posterity. For thy sparing and with-holding from the Poor, to make thy Children rich, may prove the subversion and ruin of thine House and Children.

3. Though

* *Forſitan heredi præſtabis quicquid miſericordia cauſa de ejus portione detraxeris, Aug. de tempore Serm. 76.*

3. Though thou oughtest to lay up some competent Portions for thy Children, yet ought not that to be a pretence against laying out a Portion of thine Estate here on the Poor. For know that the Poor have a right unto a part of thine Estate, as well as thy Children, though not unto so great a part. In which respect the Spirit of God calleth that part of the Rich Man's Stock which he can well spare, *the poor man's due*, unto whom of right it doth belong; for saith he, *Prov. 3. 27. With hold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it.* Whereupon said an ancient Father, * *It is the bread of the hungry which moulders in thy Cup board; it's the garment of the naked which hangs useles in thy chamber; It's the gold of the poor which lieth rusting in thy chest.* So that thy relieving the Poor, is not only an act of mercy, left to thy choice to do, or not to do, but also of justice, to the performance whereof thou standest bound: And therefore what St. Paul saith of himself concerning the preaching of the Gospel; *Necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel, 1 Cor. 9. 16.* The like should all Rich Men especially say of themselves, *necessity is laid upon us, to give out a part of our estate for the relief of the poor Saints and Servants of J. sus Christ, and woe be unto us, if we do it not.*

4. It is a great mistake in Parents, that because it is their Duty to make some provision for their Children, therefore they are bound to lay up all that possibly they can scrape together for their use, without giving any considerable part towards the relief of the Poor; for thereby they manifestly declare, that they prefer their Childrens temporal good,

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* *Est panis familici quem tu tenes, nudi tunica quam tu in conclavi conservas, &c. Basil.*

good, before their own spiritual and eternal good, and hazard the Salvation of their own Souls, for the advancement of their Childrens Estate. Oh! how little comfort will it be to you in Hell torments, to think that you have lost Heavenly Joys, for the gaining of some Earthly Enjoyments for your Children? If therefore you have little or no Charity for others, yet have some for your own Souls, by a liberal contribution to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, and that according to your own ability, and their necessity.

Obje^t. 2. Some object their poor and mean Estate, pretending that they have not wherewithal to supply the Wants and relieve the Necessities of others.

Ans^r. 1. Though thou pleadest Poverty to excuse thy not giving towards the supply of the Needy and Necessitous, yet it is to be feared, that thy Plea is not real but feigned, a meer pretence, because thou canst find Money enough to buy rich and costly Apparel for thy self, Wife and Children; Money enough to pamper thy Belly, and to feast thy rich Neighbours, Friends and Acquaintance; Money enough for the gratifying thy sinful Lusts and Pleasures; when thou canst find little or nothing for the cloathing the naked Backs of the poor Members of Jesus Christ, nothing for the filling of their empty Bellies, nothing for their comfort and support. Oh! how sad will thy Reckoning be at the great Day of Judgment, when thou shalt hear, so much spent in Cloaths, so much in costly Diet, so much in satisfying thy Carnal Lusts and Pleasures, and so little in relieving the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ.

2. Though thy plea be real, that thou art in truth in a low and mean estate, yet oughtest thou to give something when thou meetest with those that are poorer than thy self, especially if they be

in great necessity, *Eph. 4. 28.* The Apostle exhorteth poor Men, even such as Work for their living; so to labour, that they may have not only to maintain themselves and Family, but also to relieve the Necessities of others: *Let him labour, saith the Apostle, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* The deep Poverty of the *Macedonians*, we read, kept them not from contributing to the poor Saints at *† Jerusalem*, who were poorer than themselves.

Who could plead greater Poverty than the poor Widow in the Gospel, who having but two Mites, cast them both into the Treasury; of whom our Saviour giveth this testimony, *That she cast more into the treasury than the rich, for all they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living,* *Mark 12. 43.* An Half-penny or Farthing of that little which a poor Man giveth, is more in Christ's reckoning, than a whole Mass of Money out of a Rich Man's Treasure. Say not therefore I am poor, and have but little; thinking thereby to excuse thy not giving, for thou canst not be poorer than that poor Widow; but of a little give a little, and it will be accepted, *For if there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to what he hath not,* *2 Cor. 8. 12.* God looked not so much to the greatness of the Gift, as to the quantity of the Store out of which it is given, and the largeness of the Affection wherewith it is given.

Obj. 3. Some are ready to object and say, They live in dangerous times, and know not what troubles may befall them, and therefore it will be wisdom to keep what they have.

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Answer.

Ans. 1. The more dangerous the Times are, the more reason thou hast to give out of thy Store towards the Relief of others, for,

1. Thou knowest not how long thou mayest enjoy thy Life or Estate; *Whatsoever therefore thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*, Eccles. 9. 10. that is whatsoever ability or opportunity thou hast of doing good, do it, as with all diligence, so speedily. And saith the Wise-man, *Give a portion to seven, and also to eight*; Eccles. 11. 2. as if he had said, Let thy Liberality be large and bountiful, not limiting it to few, but distributing it to many: Mark his Reason in the next Words, *For thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the Earth*; i. e. what troublesome times may be. I have read of an Husband-man, who hearing of the approach of an Army, and fearing thereby the loss of all his Corn, caused as much as possibly he could to be carried into the City, and committed the custody thereof to a Friend of his. In like manner, let the apprehension of dangerous times prevail with thee to deliver some considerable part of thy Estate unto the poor Members of Christ, whereby it will be best preserved from loss and spoils.

2. Thy liberality to the Poor, will be a notable means to free thine Heart from those anxious and distrustful fears of Evil times, which do usually possess the Hearts of unmerciful Men, as the Psalmist seemeth to imply; *Psalm 112. 7, 9. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed trusting in the Lord.* The reason whereof he rendreth Ver. 9. *His hand dispersed, he hath given to the poor*, therefore he shall not be afraid of Evil Tidings. And indeed such have least ground of fear, For

1. God hath promised to deliver such from the evil to come, as *Psalm 41. 1. Blessed is he that considereth the Poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.*

2. God

2. God hath promised, that though they should fall into troublesome times, yet they shall find abundance of sweet peace and comfort in their own Souls, for saith the Lord, *If thou draw out thy Soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted Soul, It shall be as the noon-day.* If thou shalt afford unto him that which may supply his necessity, and satisfy his hunger, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day. Where light signifieth peace and comfort, as darkness signifieth affliction. So that the Prophets meaning is, that merciful Men shall have peace and comfort, in the most troublesome and uncomfortable times; which if it were seriously considered, would be a great encouragement unto us, to abound in Works of Mercy.

Obj. 4. Some object and say, If I be so full in giving, I may want my self before I die.

Ans. 1. Doth the Husband-man forbear to sow his Seed for fear of want? Nay, rather doth he not with a plentiful hand sow his Seed, that he may prevent want; being confident that by sowing his Seed, he shall in due time reap it again with such increase, that he shall thereby be enabled to sustain himself and Family. So that this objection is a groundless fear, arising from a distrustful Heart, contrary to that of the Wise-man, *Prov. 28. 27. He that giveth to the poor shall not lack*, viz. Any thing which God seeth to be good and needful for him. Nay, by not giving, thou art likeliest to come to want, for saith the Spirit of God, *There is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty*, *Prov. 11. 24.* So that keeping back and hoarding up, is the readiest way to want and penury, whereas giving to the Poor, according to that God hath given unto us, is the best means to prevent Penury.

2. Thou needest not fear Want by giving, for thereby thou wilt both secure thy Stock, and increase thy Store.

1. What thou givest to the Poor, with an honest and sincere Heart, will secure the rest of thy Estate. For as in a State Politick the Lieger-Ambassadors that are sent abroad to lie in foreign Kingdoms, to secure a peaceable State at home. * In like manner, that which thou dispersest and sendest abroad to the Poor, doth secure the rest at home. † So that in truth our earthly goods are lost by keeping, and kept by giving away.

2. That which thou gavest away to the Poor will increase thy Store. For Give, saith our Saviour, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, Luke 6.

38. By which variety of Expressions, our Saviour declareth, that charitable Men shall not only receive back again from God, what they give to the Poor, but abundantly more; which the Wise-man implieth, where he saith, *There is that scattereth and yet increaseth*; Prov. 11. 24. intimating, that the more we scatter the Seeds of our Beneficence, the greater our increase will be. And as it followeth in the next Verse, *The liberal Soul shall be made fat*, i. e. he that is bountiful towards others, shall be enriched himself. *And he that watereth*, viz. others with his Store, *shall be watered also himself*, i. e. shall be abundantly watered with the Blessing of God, that he may have wherewith to do more good. Whereupon saith the Apostle St. Paul, *He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; but he that soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully*, 2 Cor. 9. 6. Thereby hinting unto us, the great gain and increase that we shall receive by a free and liberal Contribution to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, which Job acknowledged when he said (Chap. 29. 13.) *The blessing of him that was*

* *Terrena servando amittimus largiendo servamus, Theodor.*

was ready to perish came upon me, i. e. I had their Prayers, and the Lord blessed me extraordinarily for relieving them.

† Some question there is about the lawfulness of putting out Money to use. But this is out of question, that to put out a considerable part of thine Estate to charitable uses, is as lawful, so the most gainful Usury in the World; for thereby thou shalt receive, instead of six in the hundred, an hundred for six. If therefore thou wilt be wisely covetous, fall upon the Practice of this Christian Usury, knowing that the more thou shalt adventure therein, the greater will be thy gain, and the more bountifully thou shalt receive.

Obj. 5. Some object that what they give to the Poor is utterly lost.

Ans. 1. This is directly contrary to what the Spirit of God saith, *Prov. 19. 17. He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he repay him again.* If that which thou givest to the Poor be repaid thee again, how can it be said to be lost? Indeed the Poor unto whom thou givest, are unable to repay thee, yet having such an all-sufficient Surety as God himself, who hath undertaken the re-payment, thou need'st not doubt thereof.

2. It is a great mistake in Men, to think that what they give away to charitable Uses is utterly lost: For in truth a covetous scraping, and sordid hoarding up our Wealth, is the only way of losing it. But as I have formerly shewed, a cheerful distributing part thereof to the Poor, is the surest way of securing our Stock, and increasing our Store.

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† *Eleemosyna non est divitiarum dispendium, sed ditescendi potius compendium, quastusq; omnium uberimus.*

I never yet met with a Man, who could say that he was a loser in his Estate by what he gave away to charitable Uses. And this I can affirm, that very many have, and are still ready to acknowledge, that as the Widows Oyl increased by pouring out; so that their store hath multiplied and increased by giving away to good uses.

3. What thou givest to the Poor is not lost, but sent to Heaven before thee. It is reported of *Cyrus*, that he should say, that *by doing good he boarded up riches for himself*. But sure I am, that by communicating part of thy Goods to the Poor Saints and Servants of God, *thou layest up treasure for thy self in Heaven*, Matth. 6. 20.

This is the very Argument, wherewith the Apostle in the words of the Text, inforceth this Duty of Liberality to the Poor; for, saith he, *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate*: Mark his Reason in the next words, *laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come*; where the Apostle intimateth, that by laying out on the Poor, we do in truth lay up in store for our selves. Look therefore how much thou layest out here on good uses, by a Bill of Exchange, as it were, thou shalt receive as much, yea, much more in the Kingdom of Heaven: To which agreeth that of *St. Austin*, *+ whatsoever we give to the poor, we send before us, and we shall find that in Heaven which we give here on Earth*.

I have met with a notable story to this purpose, which I shall the rather relate, because I have known some so affected upon the hearing thereof, as that they have taken up present Resolutions, to communicate more liberally to the necessities of the Poor, than

+ *Quod pauperi damus ante nos pramittimus*, Aug.

than ever they did in their Lives before. The Story is this,

Synesius a good Bishop of *Cyrene*, laboured much, and a long time with one *Evagrius* an Heathen Philosopher to convert him to the Christian Faith, but all in vain; the Philosopher still objecting that the Christian Religion taught many strange and improbable things, among others, *That he that bath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord; and he that giveth to the poor and needy shall have treasure in Heaven, and shall receive an hundred fold from Christ, together with eternal life*: Things, said he, to be derided, rather than believed. The good Bishop notwithstanding ceased not to travail with him, assuring him by many Arguments, that these things were true, and at last prevailed, so that the Philosopher and all his Children were Baptized. A while after, he cometh to *Synesius*, and bringeth with him three hundred Pounds of Gold for the Poor, bids him take it, but would have a Bill under his Hand, that Christ should repay it him in another World. *Synesius* took the Money for the Poor, and gave him such a Bill under his Hand as he desired. Afterwards the Philosopher being near his Death, commanded his Sons, that when they buried him, they should put *Synesius*'s Bill into his Hand in the Grave, which they did. The third Day after he was buried, the Philosopher seemed to appear to *Synesius* in the night, and said to him [*Come to my Sepulchre where I lye, and take thy Bill, for I have received the Debt, and am satisfied, which for thy assurance, I have subscribed with mine own hand.*] The Bishop not well knowing the meaning hereof, sent to his Sons, who told him all, whereupon taking them and the chief Men of the City with him, he went to the Grave, and found the Paper in the Hand of the Corps, thus subscribed (*Ego Evagrius Philosophus, tibi Sanctissimo Domino S. neli Episcopo, salutem: Accepi debitum in his literis*

manus

manu tua conscriptum, satisfactumque mihi est; & nullum contra te habeo jus propter aurum quod dedi tibi, & per te Christo Deo & Salvatori nostro.] That is, I Evagrius the Philosopher, to thee most Holy Sir, Bishop Synesius, Greeting: I have received the debt which in this paper is written with thy hand, and I am satisfied, and have no Action against thee, for the Gold which I gave thee, and by thee to Christ, our God and Saviour.

This Story, I say, I was willing to relate at large, not only because it passeth in antiquity for a great (tho' strange) truth, but also because as I said, I have known it reported to some, with such good effect and success, as I hope and heartily wish it may have upon thy Spirit.

4. Thy Works of Charity to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, will hereafter be rewarded with everlasting glory and happiness in Heaven. So much our Saviour expresseth by declaring, that the Kingdom of Heaven was from the foundation of the World, prepared for the merciful; Matth. 25. 34, 35. who had shewed themselves bountiful to the poor members of Jesus Christ, by cloathing the naked, feeding the hungry, &c. And saith our Saviour, Mat. 10. 41. *He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward. As by receiving a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man, is to shew kindness to him for his Righteousness sake; so by receiving a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, is not only a receiving of his Message and Ministry, but also a receiving of his Person, by shewing kindness unto him, either in entertaining of him, or contributing to his needs and necessities, and that as he is a Minister of the Gospel. And by the Prophets and righteous Man's reward, which such shall receive as relieve them, is meant, that*
surpassing

surpassing and excellent weight of Glory in Heaven, which cannot be expressed by the tongue of Men or Angels. Not that their works of charity do merit that glorious Reward, but in regard of the promise of God made to all those, who in Faith apply themselves to the practice of good Works.

Obj. 6. Many there are who make a great Profession of Religion, but manifest little power thereof in their Lives, being as backward to any good work, and as barren therein as any whosoever.

Ans^w. I must confess there is more truth in this objection, than in any I have yet met withal. For I cannot but acknowledge, there are too many whose Lives of profession are very broad, but their fruits of charity and liberality are very small; who are a shame to Religion, a reproach to Christianity, and a scandal to profession.

But this may be taken for an answer, That where as many who make a profession of Religion, are barren in good Works: Questionless they are no sincere Christians, no true Converts, but meer outside Professors. For most certain it is, that *the elect of God put on bowels of mercy*, as the Apostle St. Paul speaketh. Therefore whosoever he be that having this Worlds Goods doth make a Profession of Religion, and yet shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from his poor Brother, and will not communicate towards his Necessities, let his Profession be never so specious and glorious in the Eyes of Men, yet certainly he is but a rotten Professor and dissembling Hypocrite in the sight of God; for saith the Apostle St. James, *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their Affliction*, James 1. 27. Implying that Works of Charity are clear evidences of the Truth of our Religion, and of the sincerity of our Profession. If you look into the Scripture, you shall scarce read of a Man truly Godly, but he was charitable,

charitable, nay according to his Eminency in Godliness, he was eminent in Works of Charity, to instance in some few.

Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, as he was eminent in Godliness, so was he eminent in Hospitality, which is one of the noblest Works of Charity; For we read; how *Abraham stood at his Tent door, and no sooner saw strangers passing by, but called them in, and gave them entertainment*, Gen. 18. 1, 2.

As there was none like *Job* in his days for Piety and Godliness, of whom God himself giveth this Testimony, *That there was none like Job in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil*, Job. 1. 8. So neither was there any like *Job* for Liberality. Note what he saith of himself, *The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me*, Chap. 29. 13. i. e. I had many good Prayers and well wishes from them, whom I had relieved in their low and perishing condition, *and I caused the Widows Heart to sing for joy*, i. e. by my Bounty and Liberality to her in her Necessity, I gave her great cause of hearty Joy. And afterwards *Job* declareth how *he had not*, according to the manner of covetous and churlish Persons, *eaten his meat alone, without giving part thereof to the hungry Orphans*. Neither had he seen any perish for want of cloathing, Chap. 31. 17. Verse 19. Under which Expressions are implied, his readiness to feed the hungry, and cloath the naked, with other like acts of Charity.

It is recorded to the perpetual praise and commendation of good *Obediah*, that in the time of Famine and Persecution, he not only hid the Prophets of God by fifty in a Cave, from the cruelty of *Jezebel*, 1 King 18. 4. but that also in that extream dearth, there sustained them with Food, and supplied their Necessities.

We read of *Cornelius*, who as he was a godly and devout man, so he was very charitable, for the Spirit

rit of God giveth this Testimony of him, *That he was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the poor.* Acts 10. 2. He was not only charitable, but did abound in works of charity, *giving much alms to the poor.*

We likewise read of *Gaius*, who is recorded to be a Godly, Wealthy Citizen of *Corinth*, that he did usually in his House entertain, not only the Apostle *St. Paul*, Rom 16. 23. But also all Christians resorting to that City.

The Apostle *St. Paul*, who was an holy, zealous Christian, was likewise charitable, for in his Epistle to *Timothy*, * reckoning up some of his Graces, as his Faith, Patience, long-suffering, &c. he mentions *Charity*.

Yea, we read of *Zacheus*, that though before his Conversion he was a most covetous Extortioner, yet after his Conversion, he gave the half of his Goods to the Poor, for, said he, *Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the Poor*, Luke 19. 8.

But the most remarkable, is the Charity of the Primitive Christians, who being Converted by the Ministry of the Apostles, and having embraced the Christian Faith, it is said, that *As many of them as were possessors of lands, or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles feet, and distribution was made unto every man, according to his need*, Acts 4. 34, 35. Thus you see it hath ever been the property of a sincere Christian, and true Believer to be charitable. And certainly whosoever by a true and lively Faith are ingrafted into Jesus Christ, cannot but be fruitful Branches, bringing forth the Fruits of Mercy and Compassion, of Charity and Liberality towards their poor Brethren.

I

I shall conclude therefore with a Passage of a Reverend Divine * now with God.

‘ If the World hath lock’d up thine Heart, and
 ‘ congealed the Bowels of thy Compassion towards
 ‘ the Poor; let the Flaze of thine outward Professi-
 ‘ on shine never so fair; manage the heartless Re-
 ‘ presentations of external Holiness never so demure-
 ‘ ly; keep the times and tasks of daily Duties, with
 ‘ never so great austerity; nay, though thou be a-
 ‘ ble to amaze weaker Christians with some affected
 ‘ strains, and artificial fervency in Prayer; for all
 ‘ this, if the holy heat of brotherly Love doth not
 ‘ warm thine Heart, and upon occasion work affe-
 ‘ ctionately and effectually; I dare say, thou art
 ‘ rotten at the Heart-root, there is no true Love of
 ‘ God in thee, no Grace, no Hope of Salvation.

‘ Let that terrible and flaming Place against all
 ‘ covetous Pharisees, 1 Job. 3. 14. *Whoso hath this
 ‘ worlds goods, and seeth his brother hath need, and
 ‘ shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how
 ‘ dwelleth the love of God in him?* Let it, I say, dis-
 ‘ solve thy frozen-heartedness this way, and enlarge
 ‘ the bowels of Pity towards thy poor Brethren of
 ‘ Christ Jesus, or else never look hereafter to look
 ‘ him in the Face with comfort, or to find mercy
 ‘ at that Day.

* Mr. Robert Bolton, in his Directions for a comfortable walking with God, pag. 262.

SCRIPTURE

Scripture TESTIMONIES

FOR

Doing Good

TO THE

POOR.

EXodus 22. ver. 25. *If thou lend Money to any of my People that is Poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an Usurer, neither shalt thou lye upon him Usury.*

Chap. 23. ver. 6. *Thou shalt not wrest the Judgement of thy Poor in his Cause.*

Chap. 23 ver. 11. *But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest, and lye still; that the Poor of thy People may Eat.*

Leviticus 19. 10. *And thou shalt not glean thy Vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every Grape of thy Vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the Poor and the Stranger: I am the Lord your God.*

Chap. 23. ver. 22. *And when ye reap the Harvest of your Land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the Corners of thy Field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou*

thou gather any gleanings of this Harvest: Thou shalt leave them unto the Poor, and to the Stranger: I am the Lord your God.

Chap. 25. ver. 25. If thy Brother be waxen Poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his Kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his Brother sold, &c.

Ver. 35. And if thy Brother be waxen Poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

Ver. 39. And if thy Brother that dwelleth by thee, be waxen Poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond servant, &c.

Deuteronomy 15 7, 8, 10 and 11. If there be among you a poor Man of one of thy brethren, within any of thy gates, in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not barden thy heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor Brother: Ver. 8. But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Ver. 10. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: Because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy Works, and in all thou puttest thine hand unto: Ver. 11. For the Poor shall never cease out of the Land: Therefore I command thee, saying, thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy Brother, to thy Poor, and thy Needy, in thy Land.

Chap. 24. Ver. 14. Thou shalt not oppress an hired Servant that is Poor and Needy, &c. Ver. 15. At his day thou shalt give him his Hire, neither shall the Sun go down upon it, for he is Poor, and sauteh his heart upon it: Lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be Sin unto thee.

1 Samuel 2. 7, 8. The Lord maketh Poor, and maketh Rich: He bringeth low, and lifteth up. Ver. 8. He raiseth up the Poor out of the Dust, and lifteth up

up the Beggar from the Dunghil, to set them among Princes, and to make them inherit the Throne of Glory: For the Pillars of the Earth are the Lords, and he hath set the world upon them.

Job 5. 15, 16. But he saveth the Poor from the Sword, from their Mouth, and from the hand of the mighty. Ver. 16. So the Poor hath hope, &c.

Chap. 29. 12, 13, 16. Because I delivered the Poor that cried, and the Fatherless, and him that had none to help him. Ver. 13. The blessing of him that was ready to perish, came upon me: And I caused the Widows heart to sing for Joy. Ver. 16. I was a Father to the Poor: And the cause which I knew not, I searched out.

Chap. 31. Ver. 16, 19, 20. If I have withheld the Poor from their desire, or have caused the Eyes of the Widow to fail, &c. Ver. 19. If I have seen any perish for want of Cloathing, or any Poor without covering: Ver. 20. If his Loyns have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the Fleece of my Sheep, &c.

Chap. 34. Ver. 28. The cry of the Poor to come unto him, and he heareth the Cry of the afflicted.

Chap. 36. Ver. 15. He delivereth the Poor in his affliction, and openeth their Ears in Oppression.

Psalm 9. 18. For the needy shall not always be forgotten: The expectation of the Poor shall not perish for ever.

Psal. 10. Ver. 14. The Poor committeth himself unto thee, thou art the helper of the Fatherless.

Psal. 12. 5. For the Oppression of the Poor, for the sighing of the Needy, now will I arise, (saith the Lord) I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

Psal. 14. Ver. 6. You have shamed the Counsel of the Poor; because the Lord is his refuge.

Psal. 34. Ver. 6. This poor Man cried, and the Lord heard him; and saved him out of all his troubles.

Psal. 35. Ver. 10. All my Bones shall say, Lord, who

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who is like unto mee, which deliverest the Poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the Poor and the Needy, from him that spoileth him.

Psal. 37. Ver. 26. He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his Seed is Blessed.

Psal. 41. Ver. 1, 2, 3. Blessed is he that considereth the Poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. Ver. 2. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon the Earth; and thou wilt not deliver him into the will of his Enemies. Ver. 3. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: Thou wilt make all his bed in his Sickness.

Psal. 68. Ver. 10. Thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the Poor.

Psal. 69. Ver. 33. For the Lord heareth the Poor, and despiseth not his Prisoners.

Psal. 72. Ver. 4, 12, 13. He shall judge the Poor of the People, he shall save the Children of the Needy, and shall break in pieces the Oppressour. Ver. 12. For he shall deliver the Needy when he crieth: The Poor also, and him that hath no helper. Ver. 13. He shall spare the Poor and Needy, and shall save the Souls of the Needy.

Psal. 82. Ver. 3, 4. Defend the Poor and Fatherless: Do justice to the Afflicted and Needy. Ver. 4. Deliver the Poor and Needy: Rid them out of the hand of the Wicked.

Psal. 109. Ver. 31. For he shall stand at the right hand of the Poor, to save him from those that Condemn his Soul.

Psal. 112. Ver. 9. He hath dispersed, he hath given to the Poor; his Righteousness endureth for ever, &c.

Psal. 132. Ver. 15. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her Poor with Bread.

Psal. 140. Ver. 12. I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the Afflicted, and the right of the Poor.

Psal.

Psal. 146. Ver. 7. Which executeth judgment for the oppressed, which giveth food to the hungry, &c.

Proverbs 11. 24. There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to Poverty.

Chap. 14. Ver. 21. The latter part of the Verse, But he that hath mercy on the Poor, happy is he.

Ver. 31. He that oppresseth the Poor, reproacheth his maker: But he that honoureth him, hath mercy on the Poor.

Chap. 17. Ver. 5. Whoso mocketh the Poor, reproacheth his maker, &c.

Chap. 19. Ver. 17. He that hath pity on the Poor, lendeth unto the Lord: and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Chap. 21. Ver. 13. Whoso stoppeth his Ears at the cry of the Poor; he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.

Chap. 22. Ver. 9. He that hath a bountifull Eye shall be blessed, for he giveth of his Bread to the Poor.

Ver. 16. He that oppresseth the Poor to increase his Riches, and he that giveth to the Rich, shall surely want.

Ver. 22, 23. Rob not the Poor, because he is Poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the Gate. For the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the Souls of those that spoiled them.

Chap. 28. Ver. 27. He that giveth unto the Poor shall not lack: But he that hideth his Eyes, shall have many a Curse.

Chap. 29. Ver. 7. The Righteous considereth the cause of the Poor: But the Wicked regardeth not to know it.

Ver. 14. The King that faithfully judgeth the Poor, his Throne shall be established for ever.

Chap. 31. Ver. 9. Open thy Mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the Poor and Needy.

Isaiah 11. 4. But with Righteousness shall he judge the Poor.

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Chap. 14. Ver. 30. *And the first born of the Poor shall feed, and the Needy shall lye down in safety, &c.*

Chap. 25. Ver. 4. *For thou hast been a strength to the Poor, a strength to the Needy in his distress, &c.*

Chap. 41. Ver. 17. *When the Poor and Needy seek Water, and there is none, and their Tongue faileth for Thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.*

Chap. 58. Ver. 7. *Is it not to deal thy Bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the Poor that are cast out, to thy house? When thou seest the Nake that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy self from thine own Flesh?*

Jeremiah 20. 13. *Sing unto the Lord, praise ye the Lord: For he hath delivered the Soul of the Poor from the hand of evil doers.*

Chap. 22. Ver. 16. *He judged the cause of the Poor and Needy, then it was well with him, &c.*

Daniel 4. 27. *Wherefore, O King, let my Counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy Sins by Righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the Poor, &c.*

Zephaniah 3. 12. *I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor People; and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord.*

From the New Testament.

St. Matthew 10. 41, 42. *He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward; and he that receiveth a righteous Man, in the name of a righteous Man, shall receive a righteous Man's reward. Ver. 42. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a Cup of cold Water only, in the name of a Disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.*

Chap. 19. Ver. 21. *Jesus said unto him, if thou wilt*

wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the Poor, and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven, &c.

Luke 6. 38. Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.

Chap. 14. Ver. 13. But when thou makest a Feast, call the Poor, the Maimed, the Lame, the Blind; Ver. 14. And thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee; For thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just.

Chap. 19. Ver. 8. And Zacheus stood, and said unto the Lord, behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the Poor, &c.

Romans 15. 26. It hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia, to make a certain Contribution for the poor Saints which are at Jerusalem.

2 Corinthians 9. 6, 7, 9. But this I say, he which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; And he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully. Ver. 7. God loveth a cheerful Giver. Ver. 9. He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the Poor, &c. Read all that Chapter over.

Galatians 2. 10. Only they would that we should remember the Poor, the same which I also was forward to do.

James 2. 5. Hearken, my beloved Brethren, hath not God chosen the Poor of this World, rich in Faith, Heirs of the Kingdom, &c.

An Abstract of a Character of the truly Pious and Charitable Mr. Tho. Gouge, from Arch-Bishop Tillotson's Sermon at his Funeral.

OF his Piety towards God, which is the necessary Foundation of all other Graces and Vertues; I shall only say this, that it was great and exemplary, but yet very still and quiet, without stir or noise, and much more in substance and reality than in shew and ostentation; and did not consist in censuring and finding fault with others, but in the due care and government of his own Life and Actions, and in exercising himself continually to have a Conscience void of Offence, toward God and toward Men; in which he was such a proficient, that even after long Acquaintance and familiar Conversation with him, it was not easy to observe any thing that might deserve Blame. He particularly excell'd in the more peculiar Vertues of Conversation, in Modesty, Humility, Meekness, Cheerfulness, and in Kindness and Charity towards all Men.

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T H E E N D.

